



James Robinson

Paul Smith



JSA



THE GOLDEN AGE



JSA **THE GOLDEN AGE**

A Different Look at a Different Era

BY James ROBINSON

AND Paul Martin SMITH

Richard ORY
COLOR ARTIST

John COSTANZA
LETTERER

In **Elseworlds**, heroes are taken from their usual settings and put into **strange** times and places — some that have existed or might have existed, and others that can't, couldn't or shouldn't exist.

This is one of them.

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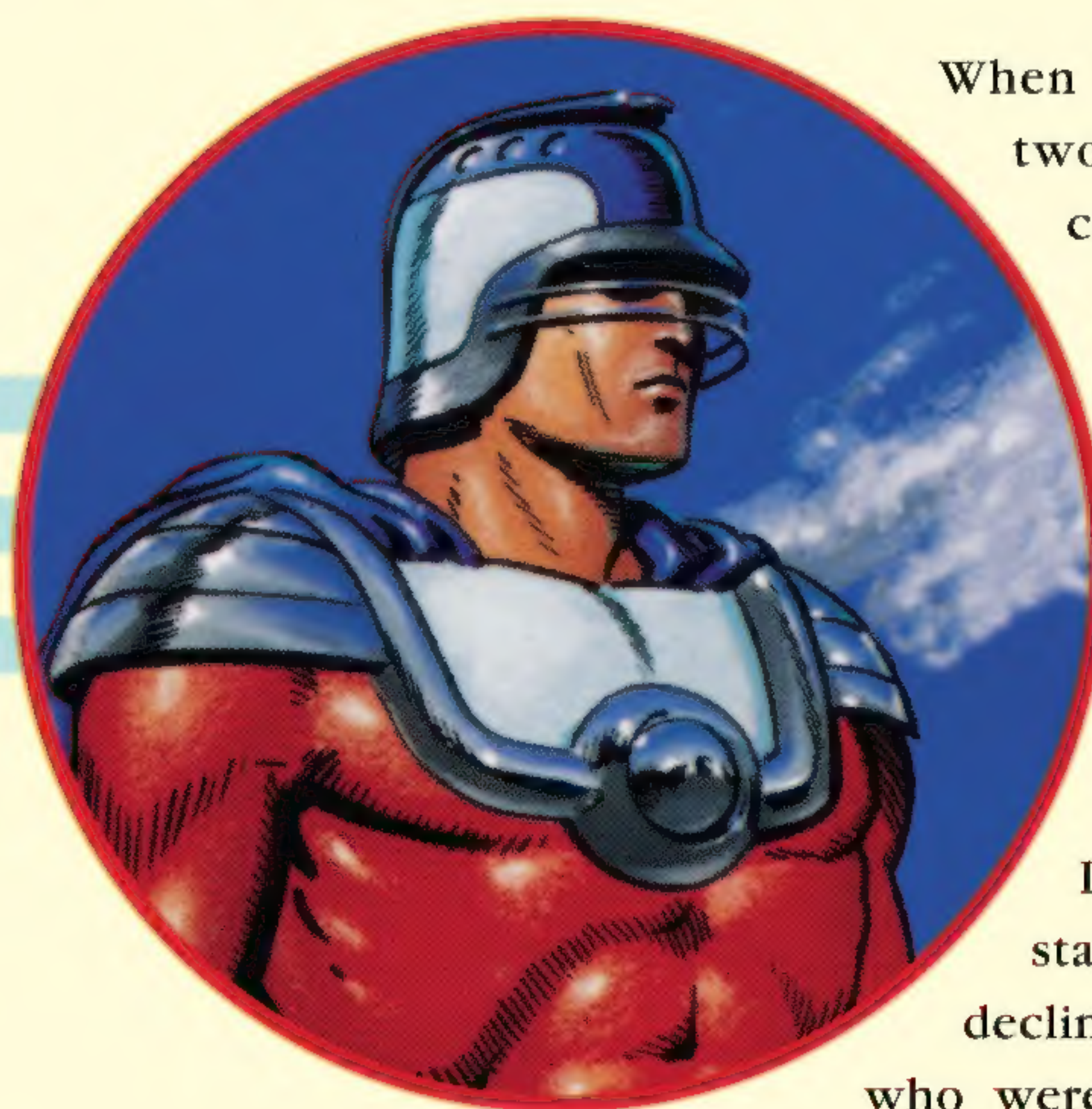
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I N T R O D U C T I O N



LAST NIGHT, BEFORE I HIT THE HAY, I DID MY USUAL CHANNEL SURF THROUGH CABLE.

I happened on Bill Maher on *Politically Incorrect*, who told a joke about a guy who paid over a hundred thousand dollars for SUPERMAN #1—and then his mother threw it away. I cracked up and thought back to my big fat fanboy collecting days.



When I was fourteen, I stole two dollars and fifty cents in quarters from my aunt Ree's coffee can filled with loose change. The money was to pay for a comic book cover dated two years before I was born.

In those days, newsstand comics were in decline—or so most of us who were hooked on the stuff believed. I learned to read from comics—like Tarzan, I may not have been able to pronounce “invulnerable” or “Sub-Mariner,” but I had a pretty good idea what they meant.

Once I learned to read, however, most off-the-rack comics were pretty lame. Too many “As luck would have its” and too much artwork that seemed restrained to the point of cowardice. But then a series of events occurred which changed my life—or at least adjusted the way I thought about comics forever.

I bought used comics for a nickel a piece from a hole in the wall on Ralph Avenue in Brooklyn, an establishment officially called My Friend's Bookstore, but known to the customers as Dave's.

by

H O W A R D

C H A Y K I N

I met Gil Kane at Dave's in the early sixties. I was awestruck by him—he was one of my favorite artists. He was hunting, as I recall, for Will James's books. But, as usual, I digress.

One day, poring through the piles of great musty-smelling crud, Dave crept out of the back of the store and showed me an ancient issue of some well-read, far from mint condition comic book from the dim dead nineteen-forties.



I must admit, I don't remember the title. I understand this disqualifies me for membership in the Eltingville Comic-Book, Science-Fiction, Fantasy, Horror, and Role-Playing Club. I do recall, however, how fat and heavy it was.

That tattered comic book was thick with history, as well as paper—64 pages for a dime, as a matter of fact—and how odd the heroes looked. This was my first real introduction to the Golden Age of comics.

From that day forward, I lived a double life of comics collecting. By day, I read and collected current newsstand stuff, in shifting partnerships with fellow syndicalists Alvin Fayman, Jan Mondrus, and Michael Abramowitz.

By night, however, I haunted every used books store I could find in Brooklyn and Manhattan, hunting W.W. II-era comics, in partnership and competition with the likes of Harvey King, Mark Skubicki, and Artie the exterminator—an older guy who carried his tradable comics inside home-made plastic slipcases inside his exterminator's tool kit. No kidding.

Where are these guys now? Have they completely forgotten their boyhood Comics obsessions and buried them along with the rest of what can only be called kid stuff? In middle age, do they ever look back with sweet regret for the joy those pop-cult archaeological digs—and find themselves unable to convey to the rest of the grown-ups in their lives just how delicious the hunt was?

Anybody who reads my stuff knows that I have a somewhat, shall we say, jaundiced point of view in regard to the super-hero comic book. I'm not particularly nuts about them—especially the current crop of endless X/Image/cyberclods. To paraphrase Jules Feiffer, these are the comic-book equivalent of gangs.

The truth is I was a super-hero fanatic as a kid—and I still think every kid should be allowed to love super-heroes. It's a terrific way to act out those early fantasies under the influence of that ol' debbil testosterone. My apologies to the PC crowd—but super-hero comics were a boys' medium—and I'll always see them as such.

And I never loved any super-heroes—including Stan and Jack's accidental stumbling into something that changed our field forever—as much as I loved what were then, in the early sixties, just called old comics. This "Golden Age" stuff came a lot later.

I loved those mid-forties heroes in general—and DC/National Periodical Publications in particular. FLASH, ALL FLASH, GREEN LANTERN, ALL AMERICAN COMICS, ALL STAR COMICS—this is what it was all about.

In most cases, the artwork was crude, bordering on the awful. The fact is, there was a war on—and able-bodied men were in the services. Like midwar Baseball, with its rosters of peculiarities and oddballs, lots of comics were being drawn by kids barely in their teens.

What those mostly urban kids had going for them that more than made up for clumsiness was an energy, a momentum—a reflection, I'm sure, of the aforementioned testosterone. Given the opportunity to make a living doing comics, these teenaged kids kicked serious ass.

As Gil Kane has so aptly put it elsewhere, he and his fellow comics-creating kids—Alex Toth, Joe Kubert, Carmine Infantino, Mort Meskin, among many others—were unknowingly creating the vocabulary of comics as a medium separate from the rarefied sophisticated stylings of their older and more skilled brothers in the newspapers.

These boys' youthful exuberance, energy and innocence exploded across those pages without discipline or anything even vaguely smacking of adult supervision—pouring from teenaged egos into the American id.

Gil has also often likened the material to the big band jazz of the period. Until I reached a certain age from which I could observe the material with a detached eye, I never quite understood what he meant. I think I do now. Growing out of the grim realities of the Depression, Comics, like Swing music, were an optimistic wedge of unbridled energy and enthusiasm—an attempt to blow away the darkness by a force of primal will.

Suffice it to say, I adored Golden Age comics—unconditionally. On one level, they were a magic window to a world that had ceased to exist—Homefronts, ration cards, men with hats—the whole schmear. For those of you who are much younger than I, who believe that the way it is now is the way it's always been, and that this is the best it can be, allow me to disabuse you of that notion.

Things were different. Ethically, textually, visually. Modern media congratulate the audience for being so much hipper than its parents, or its grandparents. Advertising convinces a bunch of contemporary suckers that they're nonconformists for buying the product they're hustling.

In reality, as simple and childlike as Golden Age comics may appear, it must be remembered that the audience for the material was pre-TV—comfortable communicating verbally without visuals, gifted with Radio, a medium that demanded a participatory imagination. So don't get smug—your parents and grandparents were probably better equipped to see through bullshit than you'll ever be.

Okay, okay, Chaykin—relax—maybe it's time to switch to decaffeinated coffee full time.

So, besides serving as popular culture artifacts, to piece together what it was like to be a kid twenty years earlier, collecting Golden Age comics also gave me a leg up on the rest of the comic-book-reading public. We knew that before Hal Jordan ran into Abin Sur, Alan Scott called himself Green Lantern, and before Barry Allen had his chemical bath in Central City, Jay Garrick was speeding around Keystone City as the Flash.

Everything was great for us collectors—until Stan and Jack came along—and the rest was history. Marvel mania possessed my soul. I stopped buying DC comics and switched to Marvel.

I became too damned cynically hip for old super-heroes at about the same time. I traded my Golden Age stuff for EC Comics, then sold my ECs to pay for an abortive college education—an education ruined, in retrospect, by too many comic books, and ended by getting a job as gofer for Gil Kane.

Which brings us to this wonderful book you hold in your hands.

In the past fifteen years or so, the best and most entertaining comics (if not the most popular), to my mind, have been as much about comics themselves as they are about their respective narratives. Certainly, Alan Moore's *WATCHMEN* is a watermark of what I'm talking about.

In the '80s, deconstructionism—in simplistic terms, the decoding of the material for its genuine meaning—trickled down from academia to become a pop-cult buzz word and parlor game. "What did that really mean—and why is he wearing those red tights, anyway?"

Since then, super-heroes and super-powers have been used as metaphors for everything from acne to STDs, from atomic power to the cult of Celebrity—all with varying degrees of success.

What James Robinson, Paul Smith and Richard Ory have accomplished with *THE GOLDEN AGE*, under the deceptively safe aegis of the Elseworlds logo, is a very witty dissection of post-World War II paranoia, using those selfsame teenaged creations, the mystery men of the Golden Age, as the crux of the story.



Above all, what these big fat pulpy comics of the forties had going for them was an utter and complete lack of irony. When those costumed characters banded together and called themselves the Justice Society of America, what they really meant was the Order Society of America. Fabulously costumed fascists—on our side!! Fantastic! How can you lose?

James has gotten down to brass tacks with these costumed characters—and climbed under their covers. He obviously loves this stuff—and has a genuine interest and understanding of the period. I'm totally convinced by his characterizations of these men and women of my parents' generation. Dialogue, mannerisms, bits of business—everything rings true to me.

Having had some little experience with what I prefer to call the reconstruction of moribund characters of the forties and fifties, I have an extraordinary respect for James's portrayal of these troubled characters. He never falls into the easy trap of presentism—of imposing modern anachronistic ideology on a period piece.

Instead, the varied joys, grief, pleasure and despair experienced by these previously innocent mystery men seems a perfect parallel of the burgeoning age of anxiety in which they lived. The second half of the nineteen-forties was a golden moment for the United States.

Face it—of all the participants in the second World War, the U.S. was untouched by the ravages of combat. The world was at peace. We had the bomb. We had prosperity. We had it all.

We also had a returning army of men who had grown up with the deprivations of the Depression, men who'd become worldly in the slaughter of the second world war. Many of these men and women chose to deny their youth in a quest for material goods—a worship at the altar of the god of the American dream.

Remember—the organization man of the fifties had been the combat veteran of the forties, and the desperately poor radical of the thirties. James's portrayal of Alan Scott's conscience opens an interesting door for me. What sort of politics does a guy who dresses up in a mask and cape espouse—and how?

Norman Rockwell, white bread, and suburban conformity may have appeared to be perfect illustrations of the American ideal, but the emergence of Bop in jazz, Abstract Expressionism in painting, and Film Noir in movies clearly indicated a darker, disturbed underbelly of that ideal.

Just as James has caught this discomfiting dichotomy perfectly in his text, Paul has found the visual language to convey the joy of victory dampened by the nagging doubts of uncertainty of this pivotal moment in the American century.

For those of you familiar with Paul's work on the X-Men for example, his craft in this book may come as a profound surprise. I have always loved Smitty's sleek, clean graphic style. For god's sake, I tried to get him to take over *American Flagg!* ten years ago, and I still think the world of *Mike Mabogany*.

But here, Mr. Smith takes a very different approach, working in a style reminiscent of the period he's illustrating. It's a risky choice, taking the distinct chance of being parody—but he pulls it off, and grandly.

Alex Raymond was a profound influence on the artists of the Golden Age of comic books. It's only fitting that he should be rediscovered by a sensational talent of this generation like Paul in a sly nod and wink to a master.

Last but far from least is Richard Ory. I'm indirectly responsible for Richard's career. We met in Biloxi in 1986, and at my suggestion, he moved out west that summer. He was my assistant on several projects, where he demonstrated an ability to learn something new, then pick up and run with it on his own.

I've had the pleasure of working with some terrific colorists, men and women who knew color theory, technique, et cetera. I don't think I know anyone who combines the various disciplines of color, atmosphere, and application in a more exciting and dramatic package. In this book, Richard's brilliant blue line color is the perfect partner to Paul's black and white art and James's text.

So, what these three gifted gentlemen have done is somewhat different from the other radical deconstructions that have come before. For one thing, they have concerned themselves with the portrayal of an era fading daily into a soon-to-be forgotten past. For another, the action sequences—fight scenes, as we still call them—are choreographed with an organized narrative in mind.

Not many comics people these days concern themselves with narrative action laid out with a beginning, a middle and an end. I've likened comics as they were once produced to basketball games—physically powerful men and women moving with fluid grace, beating the living daylights out of each other—an outward sign of inner trauma, to quote Walter Simonson.

These days the basketball games have been replaced by bodybuilding competitions. Overmuscled men and women striking poses threatening action, drawn by men and women who can't animate a figure.

It's terrific to see James giving Paul and Richard an occasionally difficult narrative worth illustrating, and to see both men delightfully rising to the occasion. I'm consistently convinced by their portrayal of that anxious America, both in words and pictures.

The world of comics has always had the atmosphere of a private club gone shabby; the stuff we grew up with was often too near and dear to our hearts to be able to suffer and survive reappraisal. So I suspect a lot of fans of this material might have a problem with the adjustments these three men have made.

I wonder what my fellow collectors Harvey, Mark or Artie think of it.

But hey. We're talking about comics here, not a cure for cancer, or even rocket science, for God's sake. One of the wonderful things about these costumed characters is their incredible longevity. Think about it. Over fifty years of masked men, of caped crusaders, of costumed characters.

Regardless of anal-retentive attempts to weave these little stories into some insipid continuity, the adventures of the Golden Age Green Lantern, Hawkman and the rest still retain their bumptiousness, youthful innocence, and naive charm.

What James, Paul and Richard have done for us is to take a peek under those masks and get behind those disarming grins—to use the charming innocence of those beloved mystery men as a wonderful metaphor for a country still trying to convince itself it was a land of innocent dreams.

JAMES ROBINSON WRITER

A British citizen by birth and a resident of California for the last six years, James Robinson broke into comics writing in 1988 with the critically acclaimed graphic novel *London's Dark*. That work was followed by the *Grendel Tales* story arc "Four Devils, One Hell," which only recently saw publication. These stories paved the way for the extensive succession of titles that followed, which included *Blue Beard* for Slave Labor Graphics, *Illegal Alien* from Kitchen Sink, *67 Seconds* for Epic, several *Dark Horse Terminator* projects, the *LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT* story arc "Blades," and *THE GOLDEN AGE*.

Citing *GOLDEN AGE* and *LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT* editor Archie Goodwin as his primary influence and guide, James has recently become a highly recognized talent in the comics field as the writer of *WildC.A.T.S.*, *VIGILANTE*, the *LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT* story arc "Werewolf," *WITCHCRAFT*, and the intensely popular *STARMAN*—with the latter two earning James his first Eisner Award nomination for Best Writer.

In addition to his comics writing, James also puts his degree in filmmaking to work on his second screenplay, an aerial adventure called *Wild Blue Yonder*.

PAUL SMITH ARTIST

Paul Smith began his career in illustration by working in animation, first with Ralph Bakshi (where he worked on such feature films as *The Lord of the Rings* and *American Pop*), then later with Hanna-Barbera and Filmation, doing animation and storyboards respectively.

Paul won his first comics assignment in late 1980 from Marvel Comics editor Al Milgrom. A number of inventory stories and guest artist jobs followed—including a story for *Marvel Fanfare* starring a certain band of mutants, an assignment that led to his being chosen as the regular artist on *The Uncanny X-Men*. After a well-received tour on that series, he moved on to such titles as *Doctor Strange*, *Nexus*, and the 1985 *BATMAN Annual*, "The Four Faces of Batman."

Introduced to James Robinson, and *THE GOLDEN AGE* project, by *Nexus* creator Steve Rude, Paul feels that his work on *GOLDEN AGE* was a "justification of his style" (one that has been heavily inspired by the work of Steve Ditko and Alex Raymond), where he was "at ease" and able to create what is considered by many to be one of the finest achievements of his career.

RICHARD ORY COLOR ARTIST

Born in New Orleans, Richard Ory got his start as a commercial artist, working primarily in advertising and promotion. Befriended and "saved" by writer/artist Howard Chaykin, Richard moved out to California and joined Chaykin as his art assistant. Working on such series as *BLACKHAWK*, *Nick Fury/Wolverine*: "The Scorpio Connection," *Time2* and *American Flagg*, Richard soon found himself drawn to coloring, an aspect of comics he still pursues and enjoys.

Using a special style of painted color (as opposed to the more traditional "flat" color process), *THE GOLDEN AGE* was Richard's first comic-book project since briefly leaving comics to work in animation. Richard continues to use his coloring gifts in the comics industry, preferring to focus on posters, covers, and other such projects that allow him to spend the time his sense of perfection demands.

This work is dedicated to Mort Meskin, Jack Burnley, Jack Kirby, Martin Modell, Bernard Baily and all the other writers and artists from that bygone time, whose rich legacy I have been allowed to plunder. Add to that Archie Goodwin, Roy Thomas and Paul Levitz, each of whose latter-day work with these old DC characters also helped inspire me to write the tale you now hold.

Thanks to Scott Rowland and Malcolm Bourne.

James Robinson

For the world's greatest father, Cdr. Allen Martin Smith. U.S.N. Ret., from the world's lousiest son. Whatever good I've done was from trying to be like you. All the stupid stuff I did on my own.

The artist would like to thank Larry Welch for his inking assist on issue 4. Not just for the great job, but for giving it every bit of attention he had. Thanks also to Geoffrey Patterson of Geoffrey's Comics in Gardena, CA, for his research assistance and for allowing me access to his Golden Age collection. Ain't nuthin' like the real thing.

Paul Smith

To my friends A.G. Parr and Carl Tupper.

Richard Ory



"The
world
was at
peace."



THE EARLY '40S.

WARTIME.

WHEN BRAVE AMERICANS
GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR
THEIR COUNTRY.

IN DISTANT LANDS
AND FAR AWAY.

ON THE HOMEFRONT...
THE PAIN WAS OF
THE HEART.

DEATH COMING TO FAMILIES
IN THE GUISE OF DREADED
TELEGRAMS.

SAD.

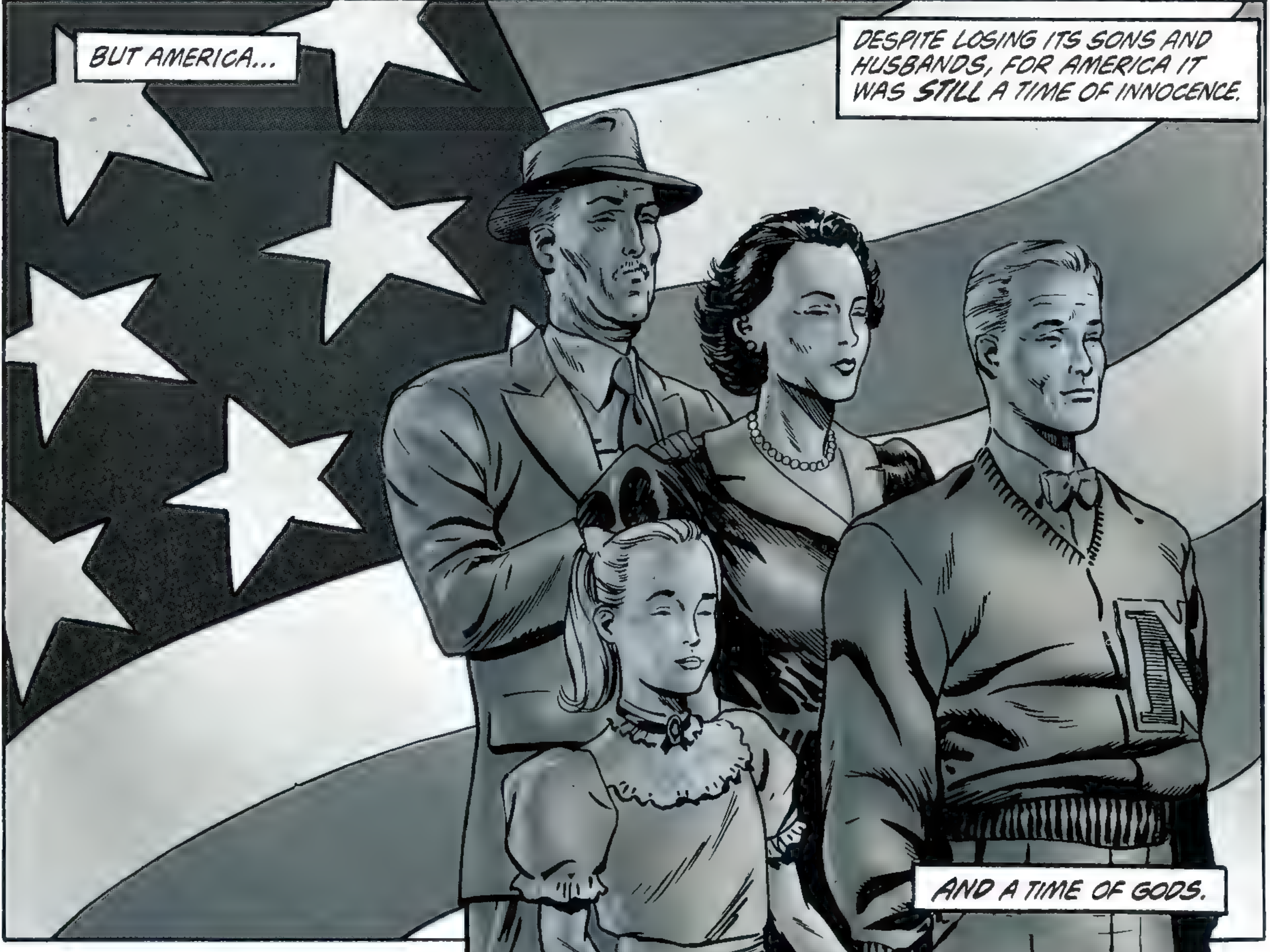
BUT WITHOUT THE BLOOD
AND FIRE THAT EUROPE
KNEW TOO WELL.



FOR THOSE AT HOME THE WAR WAS SCRAP
DRIVES, FOOD PARCELS, AND THE BUYING
OF WAR BONDS...THE RIGHTEOUS STRUGGLE
OF PURE, CLEAN, PATRIOTISM.

BATTLE WAS RAVAGING EUROPE AND
ASIA, WITH NATIONS' PEOPLE
BECOMING COLD... HARD... CALLOUS,
FROM ALL THEY HAD TO ENDURE.

THE BLOOD AND FIRE.



BUT AMERICA...

DESPITE LOSING ITS SONS AND
HUSBANDS, FOR AMERICA IT
WAS STILL A TIME OF INNOCENCE.

AND A TIME OF GODS.

Sunk,
by Attack :

THE HALCYON DAYS OF
THE JUSTICE SOCIETY
AND THE ALL STAR
SQUADRON.



BRAVE HEROES IN GAUDY
COSTUMES, FIGHTING THE
HOMEFRONT GOOD-FIGHT.

**WIT-SIZED POWERHOUSE
PUMMELS PERVERT**
Today the women of Boston can feel a
little safer, knowing that Mr. Fingers is
behind bars. The gangly jewel-thief, who
pinches his female victims' back-
sides as a trademark and given a

LIFE

HEROES ALL:
A profile of the Justice
Society of America

**COSTUMED
HERO HAS
FIFTH COI
SEEING
STARS**

DAILY PLANET

**RAG DOLL
'RUSHED',
BEHIND BAR**
The Flash saves triple
In a blur of scarlet sp
again captured b
ash. The kidnapp
Van Elk tri
delivered

**LULLABY ON
BROADWAY!**
Sandman catches Theater-Blade
Theater-Blade, the murderous
fiend who brought a reign of ter
ror to New York's theater-goe
with his savage, random killing
was at last apprehended by
gas-masked vigilante,
Sandman.

**BRAINWAVE SUFFERS
BRAIN DRAIN AT HAND
EMERALD KNIGHT!**

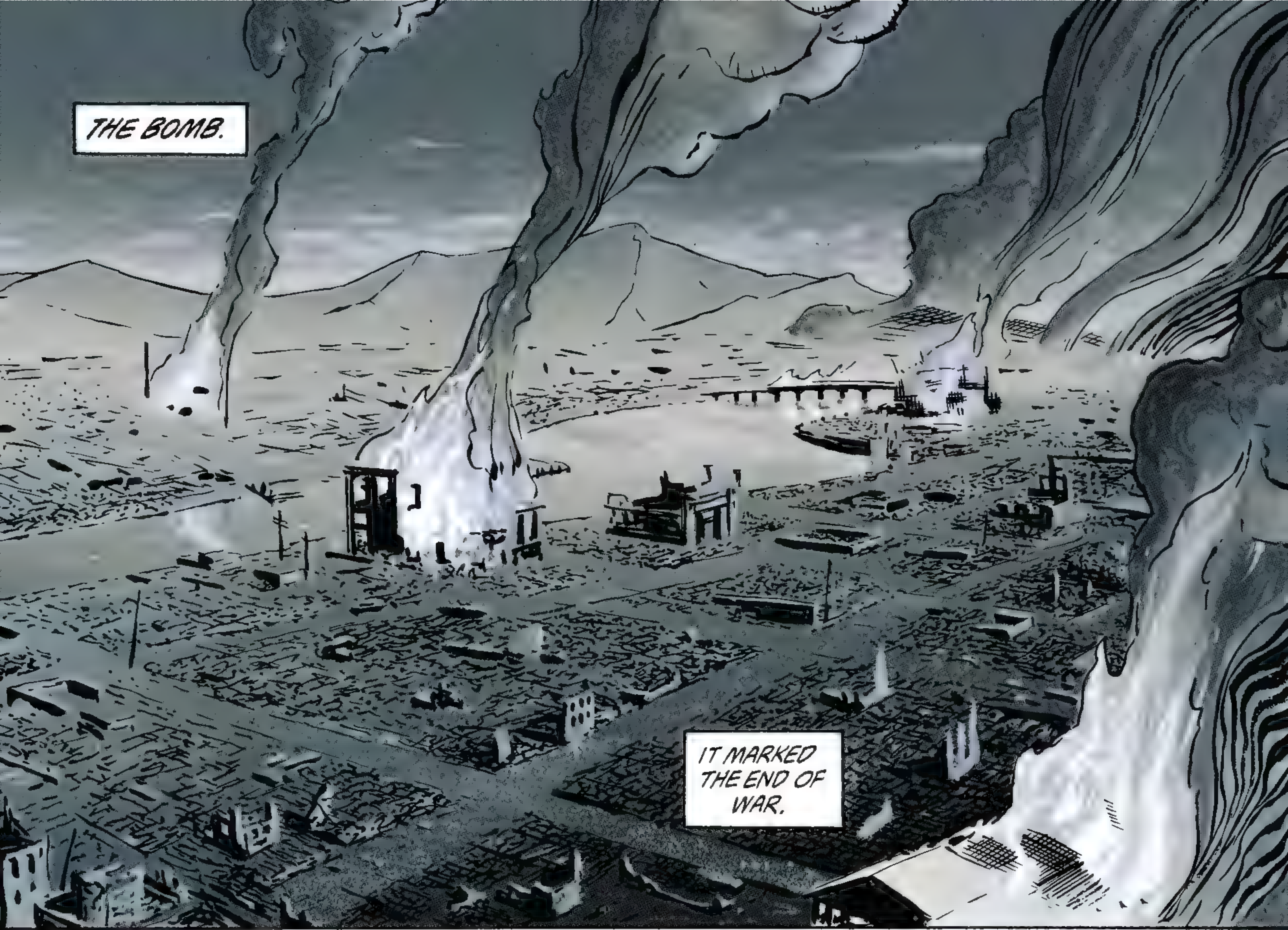
**AMERICAN PLANES
SAVED FROM
DESTRUCTION BY
MAN OF THE HOUR!**
At Midnight yesterday the down-
town factory where 24 newly-com-
pleted B-52 bombers
stored should

WITH FISTS AND SMILES
AND HAPPY ENDINGS...



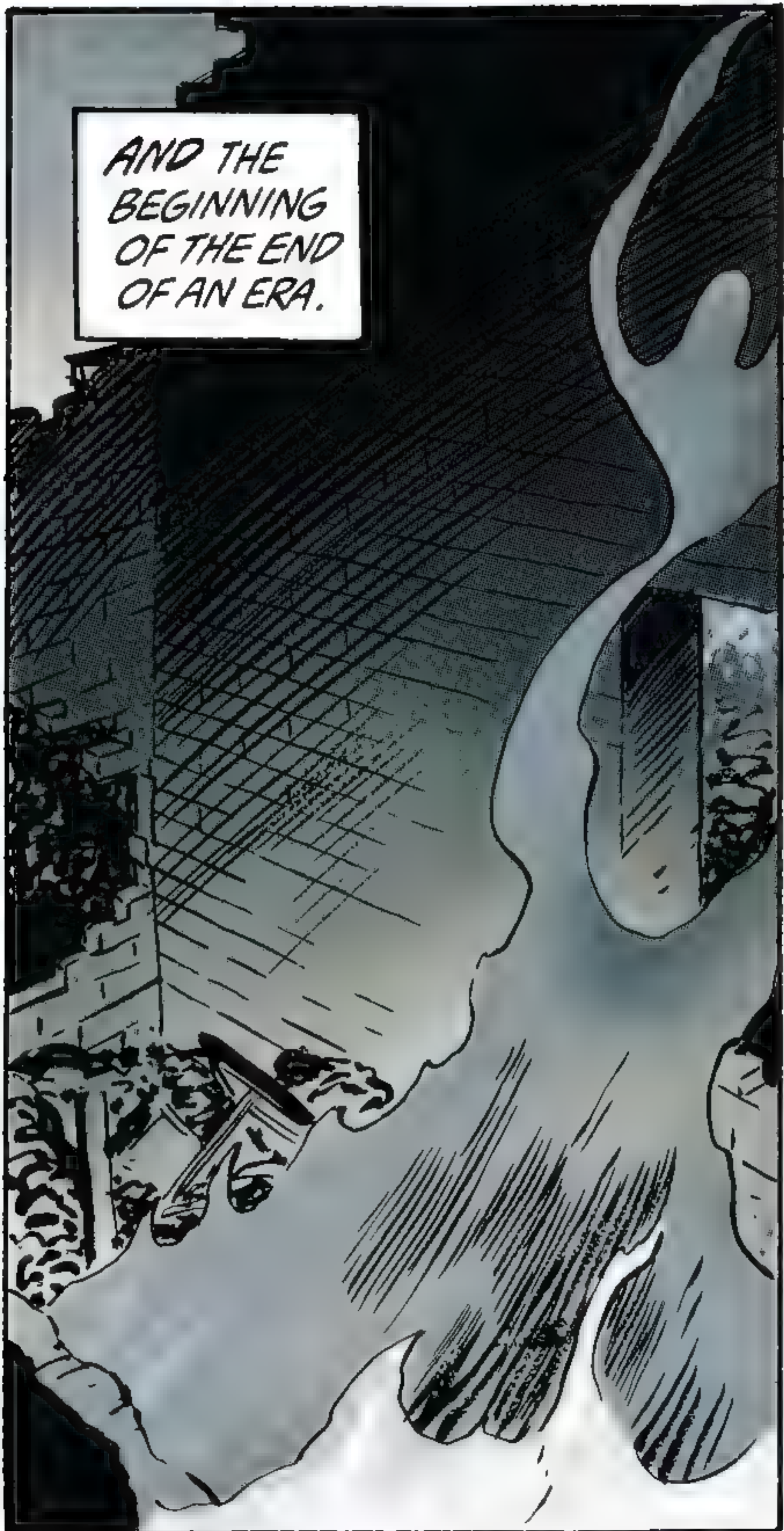
UNTIL AUGUST 6,
1945.





THE BOMB.

IT MARKED
THE END OF
WAR.



AND THE
BEGINNING
OF THE END
OF AN ERA.



THE BEGINNING
OF THE END...



...OF THE
GOLDEN
AGE.

THE SHIPS ARE IN... UNLOADING
THEIR CARGO.

UNLOADING SOMETHING IN
DEMAND THIS YEAR. SOMETHING
THE COUNTRY IS GLUTTED WITH,
BUT CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF..

HAPPINESS.

1946. A YEAR OF HEROES.
SOLDIERS WHO WENT... AND
FOUGHT... AND RETURNED.

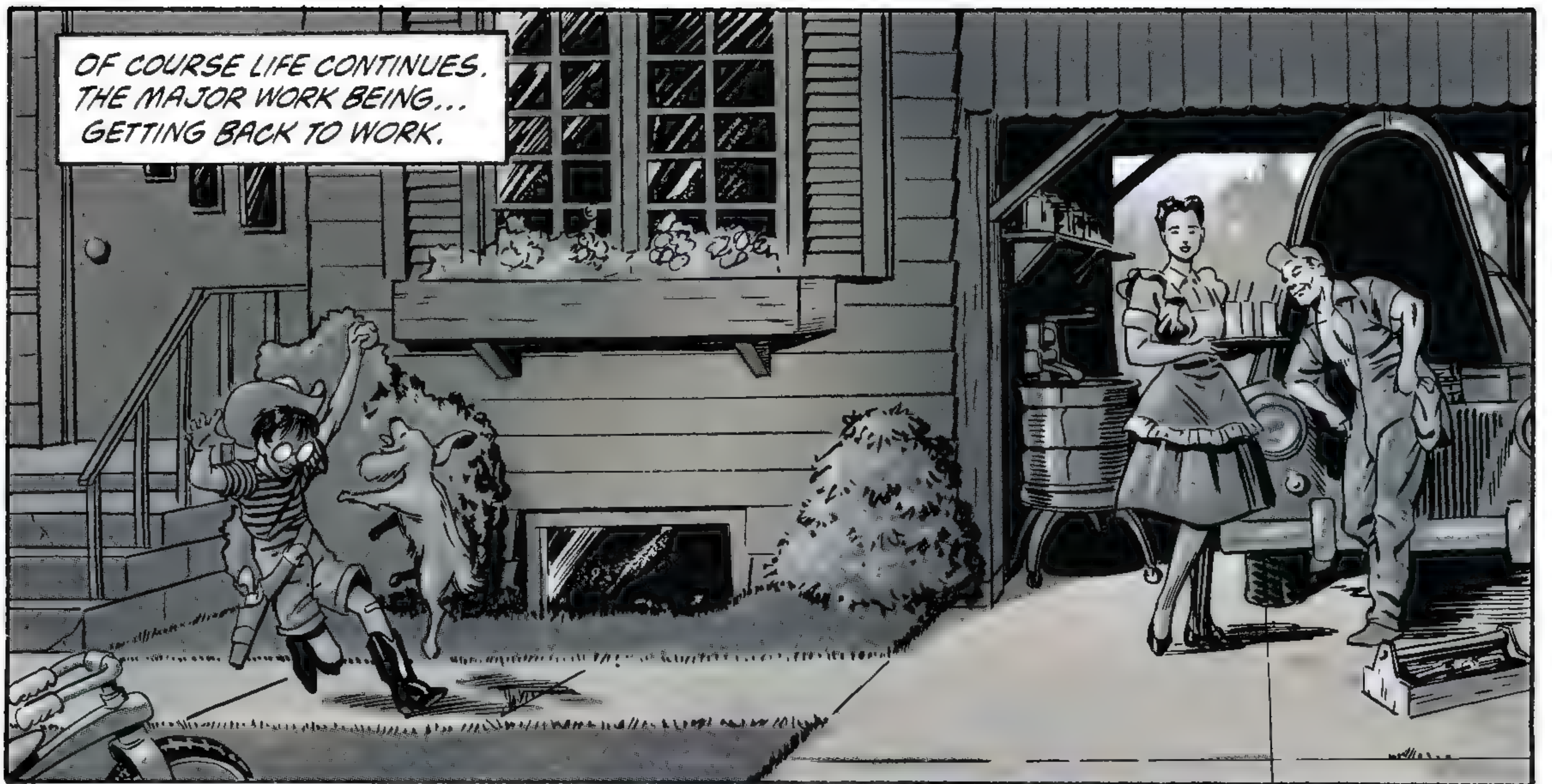
AND NOW LOVERS KISS
ONCE AGAIN.

FATHERS FINALLY
SEE SONS AND
DAUGHTERS
WHOSE BIRTHS
THEY WEREN'T
AROUND TO
WITNESS.

MOTHERS
HEAR THEIR
SONS'
VOICES.
AND WEEP.

WERE THERE EVER MYSTERY MEN
WHO CALLED THEMSELVES HEROES?
WHO CAN REMEMBER?

IT'S 1946.

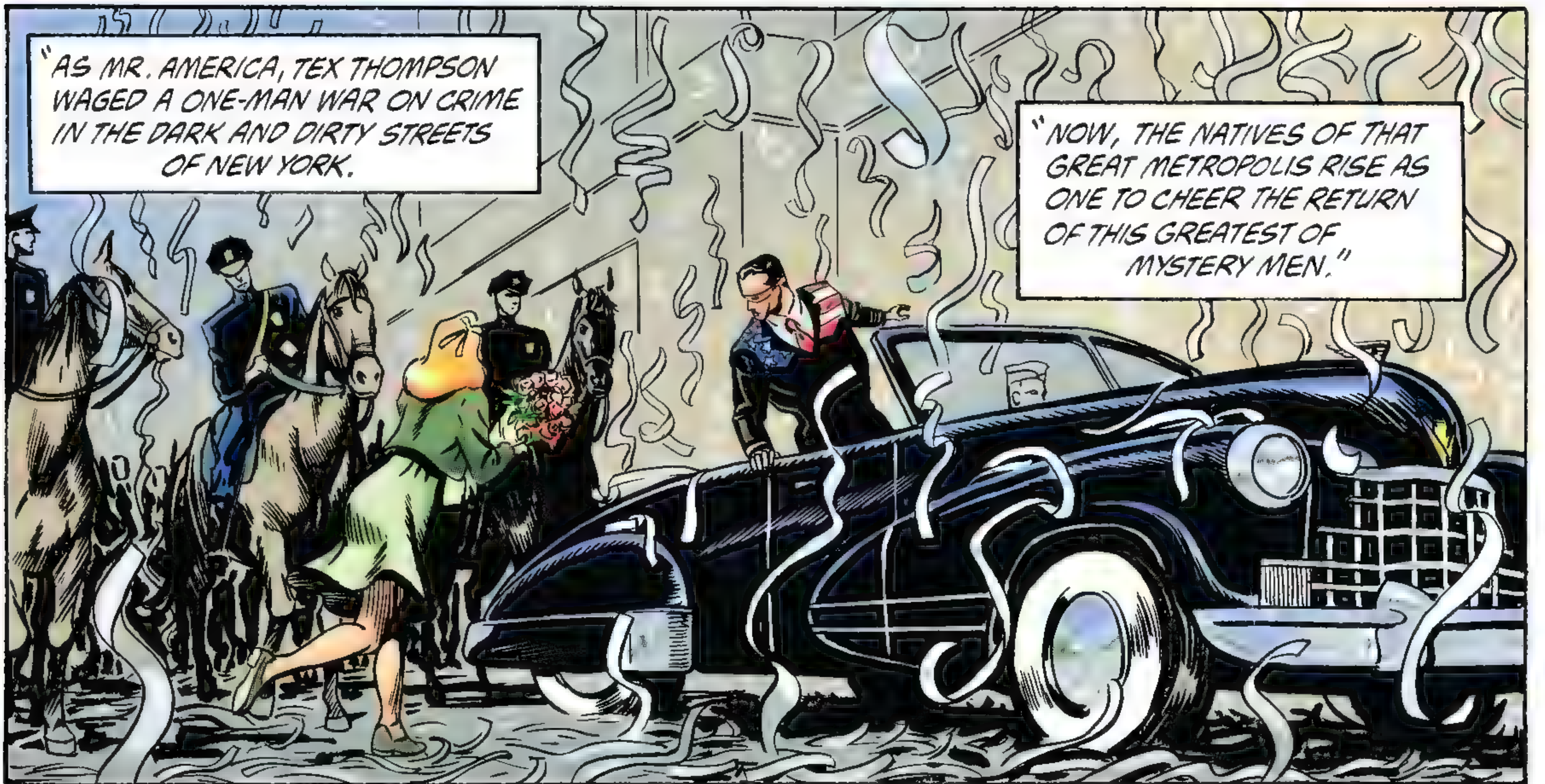


AND FOR
ONE HERO...

... THE HOMECOMING
HAS JUST STARTED.

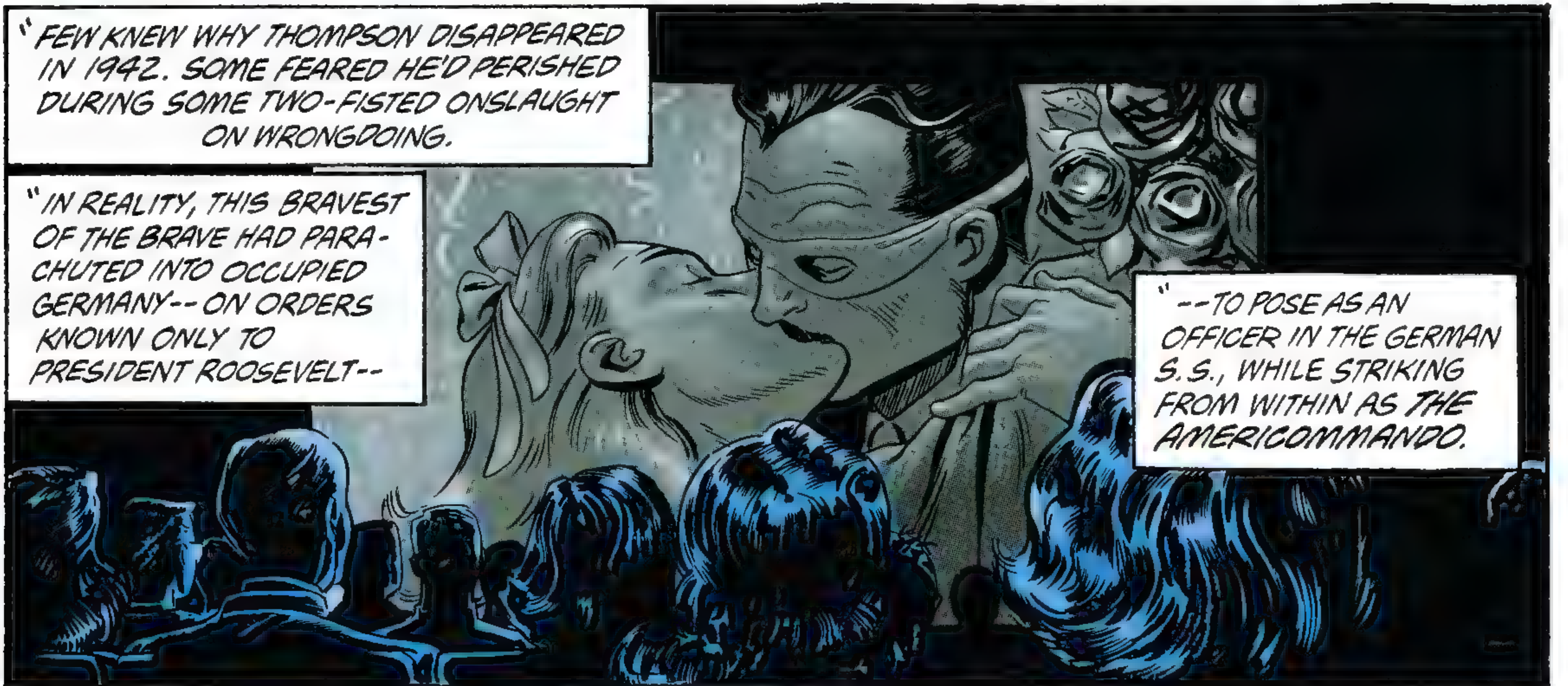
-- NO ALL NEW YORK
HAS TURNED OUT TO
HONOR ITS GREATEST
CHAMPION.

TEX THOMPSON--
MR. AMERICA--
THE
AMERICOMMANDO!



"AS MR. AMERICA, TEX THOMPSON
WAGED A ONE-MAN WAR ON CRIME
IN THE DARK AND DIRTY STREETS
OF NEW YORK.

"NOW, THE NATIVES OF THAT
GREAT METROPOLIS RISE AS
ONE TO CHEER THE RETURN
OF THIS GREATEST OF
MYSTERY MEN."



"FEW KNEW WHY THOMPSON DISAPPEARED
IN 1942. SOME FEARED HE'D PERISHED
DURING SOME TWO-FISTED ONSLAUGHT
ON WRONGDOING.

"IN REALITY, THIS BRAVEST
OF THE BRAVE HAD PARA-
CHUTED INTO OCCUPIED
GERMANY-- ON ORDERS
KNOWN ONLY TO
PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT--

"--TO POSE AS AN
OFFICER IN THE GERMAN
S. S., WHILE STRIKING
FROM WITHIN AS THE
AMERICOMMANDO.



"THE REICH'S CADRE OF SUPER
HUMANS... OTTO FRENTZ, THE
DREADED PARSIFAL... AND
ADOLF HITLER HIMSELF.

"ALL DIED BY
THOMPSON'S HAND.



"WITH THE FACTS OF THOMPSON'S
SELFLESS MISSION NOW
REVEALED TO ALL, AMERICA
LOVES ITS CHAMPION OF
CHAMPIONS.

"THOMPSON
SMILES AT
THE CROWD.

"AND SMILE
HE MAY--



"--THIS IS ONE
MAN WHOSE
FUTURE
LOOKS
BRIGHT."

BUT WHAT
ABOUT
ME, TEX?

WHAT
ABOUT
ME?

THE SHIPS ARE
IN... UNLOADING
THEIR CARGO.

THOUGH NOW THERE ARE
NO CHEERS OR TEARS
OF JOY... FOR THE MEN
WHO SWEAR AND SWEAT
AND HAUL THE CRATES.

ARRIVING IN AMERICA IS
TINNED FISH FROM PORTUGAL...
COOKING OIL FROM SPAIN...



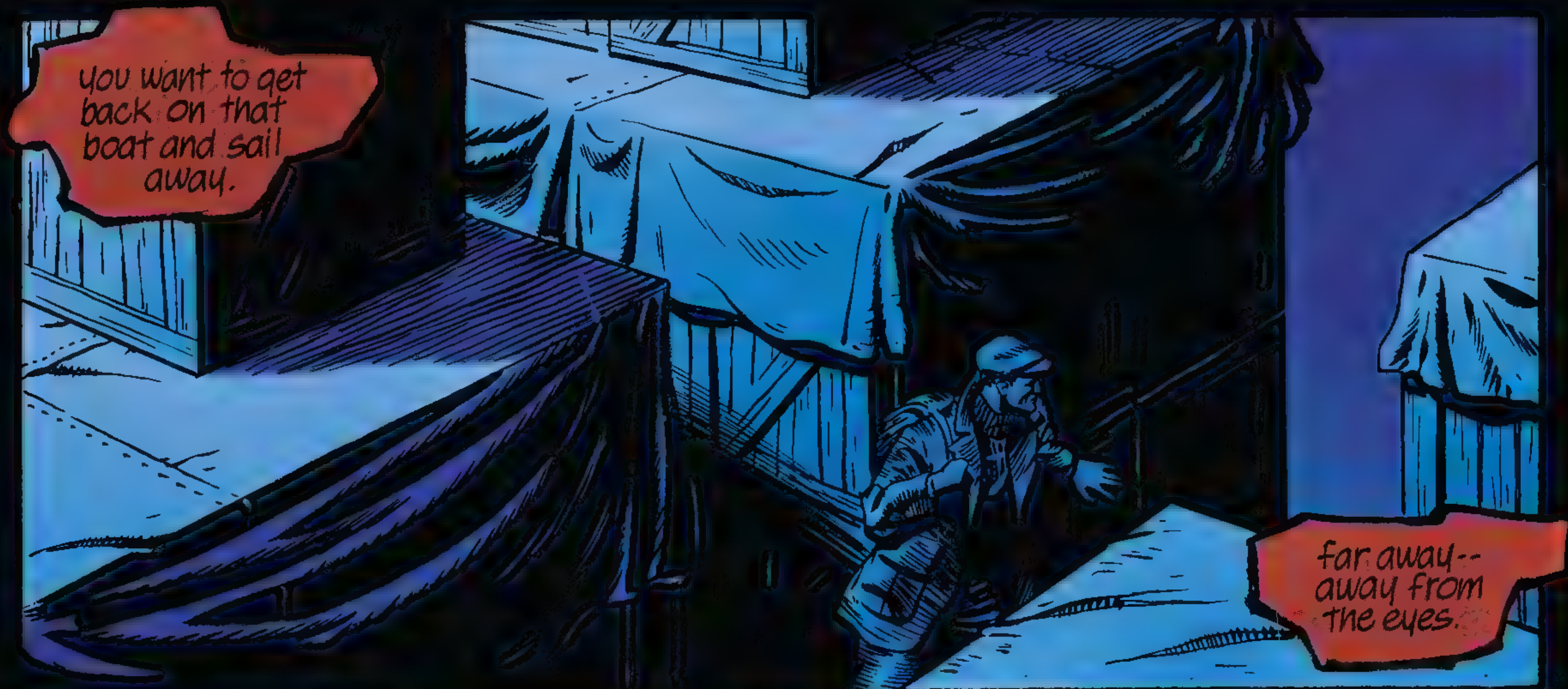
...AND ONE FINAL,
FORGOTTEN...

...RETURNING
HERO.

back--

--you're
back.

finally found
the courage to
return.



you want to get
back on that
boat and sail
away.

far away--
away from
the eyes.



eyes everywhere. you
feel them--burning
into your soul.

if only they'd
sear your
brain--

--and
return your
memory
to you.

KILLER...

!!!



danger! you
sense it every-
where--as if
you're prey.

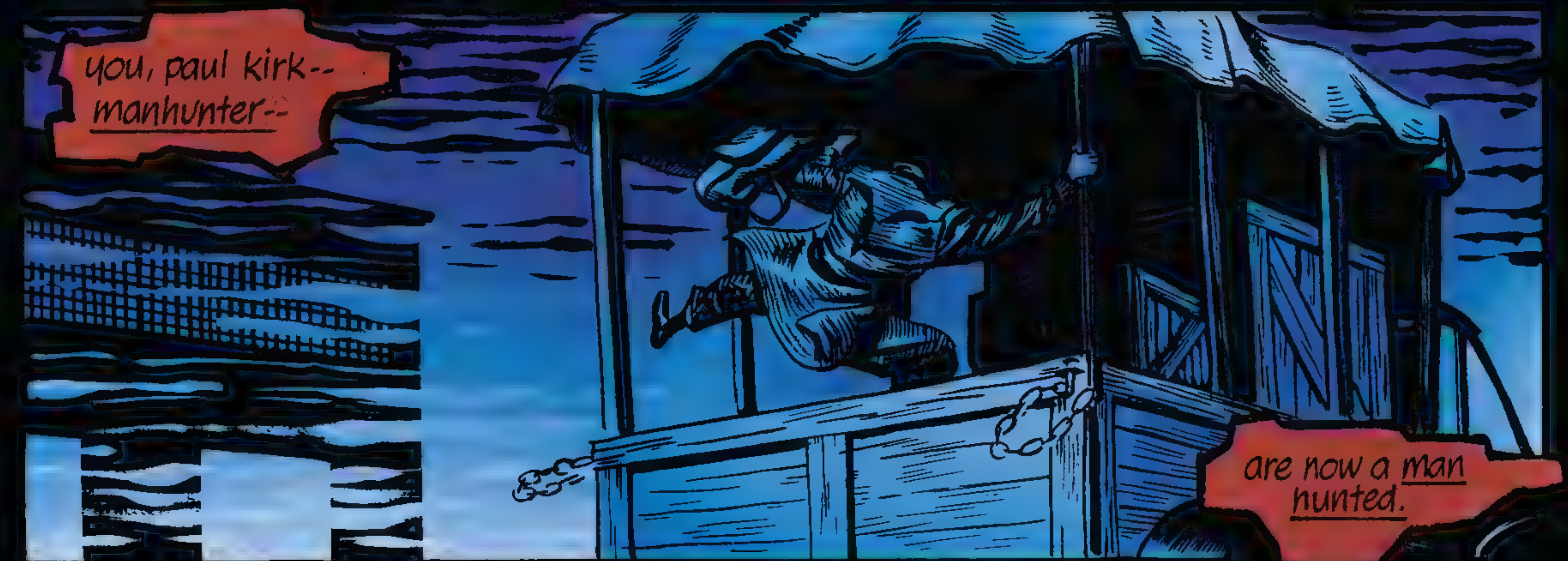
DAMN
BACKACHE'S
A KILLER.

COUPL'A
BOILERMAKERS
OUGHTA FIX
THAT.

WEEK IN
BED'D FIX
IT BETTER.



it's not funny
but you laugh
anyway.



you, paul kirk--
manhunter--

are now a man
hunted.

1947. AND A
MAN SPEAKS.

THE PEOPLE
LISTEN. ALL THE
PEOPLE...

...TO THE PRESIDENT...
HIS VOICE THICK WITH
EMOTION.

THE
CONGRESSIONAL
MEDAL OF HONOR...

...IS THE GREATEST
DISTINCTION THAT THIS
COUNTRY CAN BESTOW
ON ONE OF ITS
NATIVE SONS.

YET, AS I PLACE THIS AROUND
YOUR NECK, TEX THOMPSON...
MR. AMERICA, I HAVE ONE
THOUGHT.

"THIS ISN'T
ENOUGH. THIS
ISN'T NEARLY
ENOUGH."

MR.
PRESIDENT...

THOMPSON
SPEAKS.
STILL
LISTENING
ARE THE
PEOPLE.

...SERVING
MY COUNTRY
IS ALL THE
HONOR I
WANT.



Documentary's coming along. Still needs an ending, though. One I'm happy with.

...S ALL THE HONOR...

Could trim this sequence. There's too much Thompson. This film's about mystery men -- "Where are they now?" NOT about Thompson -- we all know where he is.

Didn't think the editing would take this long. I'm turning into a perfectionist. And the title -- "Yesterday's Gods." Too corny.



Danger of running over-budget. Can't let TIME get away from me. Not if I expect offers to make more films AFTER this.



JOHNNY QUICK could finish the WHOLE movie. Working edit-- Fine cut--rewrite the voice-over--lay the sound track.

All in a moment.



But Quick's not here. NOT ANYMORE.

And Johnny Chambers works at his own pace.



still torn by the narrative. Do I make it palatable to the public? OR do I tell the truth?

"...THE EARLY '40 S, HE SPENT AS THE SCOURGE OF THE NEW YORK UNDERWOR..."

Ha. Thompson was second-rate. Just another pair of fists and a domino mask. And that costume--a joke.

"... INTO THE NAZI HEARTLAND FOR THE WAR'S DURATION..."

Yeah. THAT was something. Although he'd been so ineffectual over here, most of us didn't realize he'd even gone.

"... RETURNED TO GLORY AND A NATION'S LOVE..."

He CERTAINLY did.

"...NTLEMEN, GENTLEMEN. MY APPOINTMENT TO REPLACE THE LATE SENATOR HUGHES IS BY NO MEANS SURE..."

It's as sure as his moustache. WHO does he think he's kidding?

And my film's big question--where are the REAL mystery men?

The joke--the frustrating joke--is that I know the answer and can't say. I know EXACTLY where they are. AND what they're doing. Some of 'em, anyway--

Jay--the first to quit. With a shrug and a half smile, like he didn't really care. How'd he put it--? "The world's gotten too fast for the Flash."

Married that girl of his--settled down. I hear his research company's doing well--in a small way.

ME OR HIM-- I wonder who was faster.

No-- maybe I don't.

And Carter Hall--losing it. Getting more and more into the Egyptian thing.

"Reincarnated from an ancient pharaoh." That's what he always said. NOW, he's obsessed by the notion.

I just think--he's mad.

Terry Sloane--His airline's up and running.

He was good at EVERYTHING. That's what made him MR. TERRIFIC. But "everything" is a lot to keep in line. It DILUTED his intensity.

And God knows a costumed hero NEEDS intensity.

The airline, he bought for a song. Too cheap, some say. Rumor has it he used force to get the price so low.

So much for "Fair Play," huh, Terry?

And Johnny Quick--THAT JERK! He separated from his wife, stopped running, stopped smiling, and started smoking.

Good riddance to him.

I should have done things differently--I see that now. But a lot should have been different then. The war could have ended in days if the super-heroes had been allowed to fight it.

Hitler's *Spear of Destiny*, with the power to control super-heroes when they crossed into occupied territory... was fiction. To explain--excuse--why we didn't go to war.

The real reason was a German super-hero, Otto Frenzt. Had the code name *Parsifal*, although he looked nothing like a knight in armor. But his power--his power negated the super-powers of others. Of course we didn't know that in 1940.

Until *GreenLantern* and *Starman* went to Germany on a reconnaissance mission--to "assess the situation." They barely escaped with their lives.

1942. The Philippines. The *Flash* and the *Ray* were asked to aid MacArthur's initial push. During the foray, Frenzt was sighted. And we all know what happened to MacArthur's initial push.

It was thought an American super-human's death would be too much of a morale blow. By presidential decree no super-hero was to cross the Atlantic. If only Frenzt's whereabouts could have been pinpointed. If only he could have been eliminated. If only.

But not even the Nazi high command knew Frenzt's day-to-day whereabouts. And U.S. intelligence certainly didn't.

When Thompson finally found and killed Frenzt, the Allies were already in reach of Berlin. The A-Bomb was a reality. It was too late for us with the masks and the super-powers.

Thompson basked in the people's love. And out of vanity--pride bruised by glory denied--we gave up our costumed identities. Most of us.



Like sulking children no longer wanting to play--



-- except for one. He had nobler reasons for putting his mask away in the drawer--

-- along with his power ring.

THERE'S A WINTER'S CHILL IN GOTHAM CITY... EVEN THOUGH IT'S SUMMER.

TROUBLE'S BREWING.

IT'S MY WRITERS... SOME OF THEM HAVE SOCIALIST TIES. OR A MEMBERSHIP CARD SOMEWHERE IN THEIR PASTS.

NOW THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON UNAMERICAN ACTIVITIES IS BEGINNING TO MAKE THINGS HARD FOR THEM. YOU'RE MY LAWYER, GIVE IT TO ME STRAIGHT... HOW CAN I FIGHT THIS?

YES, I DO INTEND TO STAND BEHIND MY EMPLOYEES. THEY'RE GOOD WRITERS... GOOD MEN.

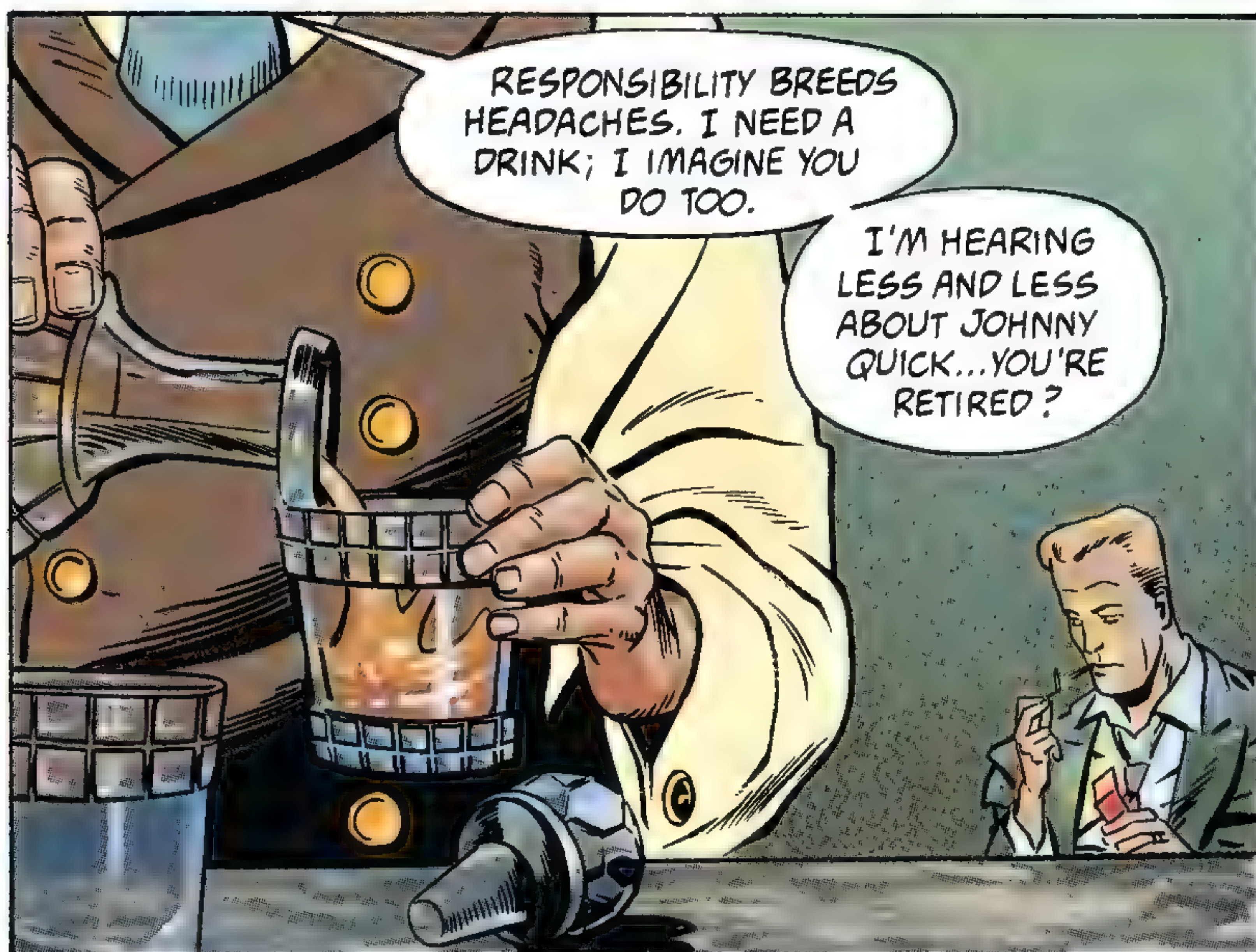
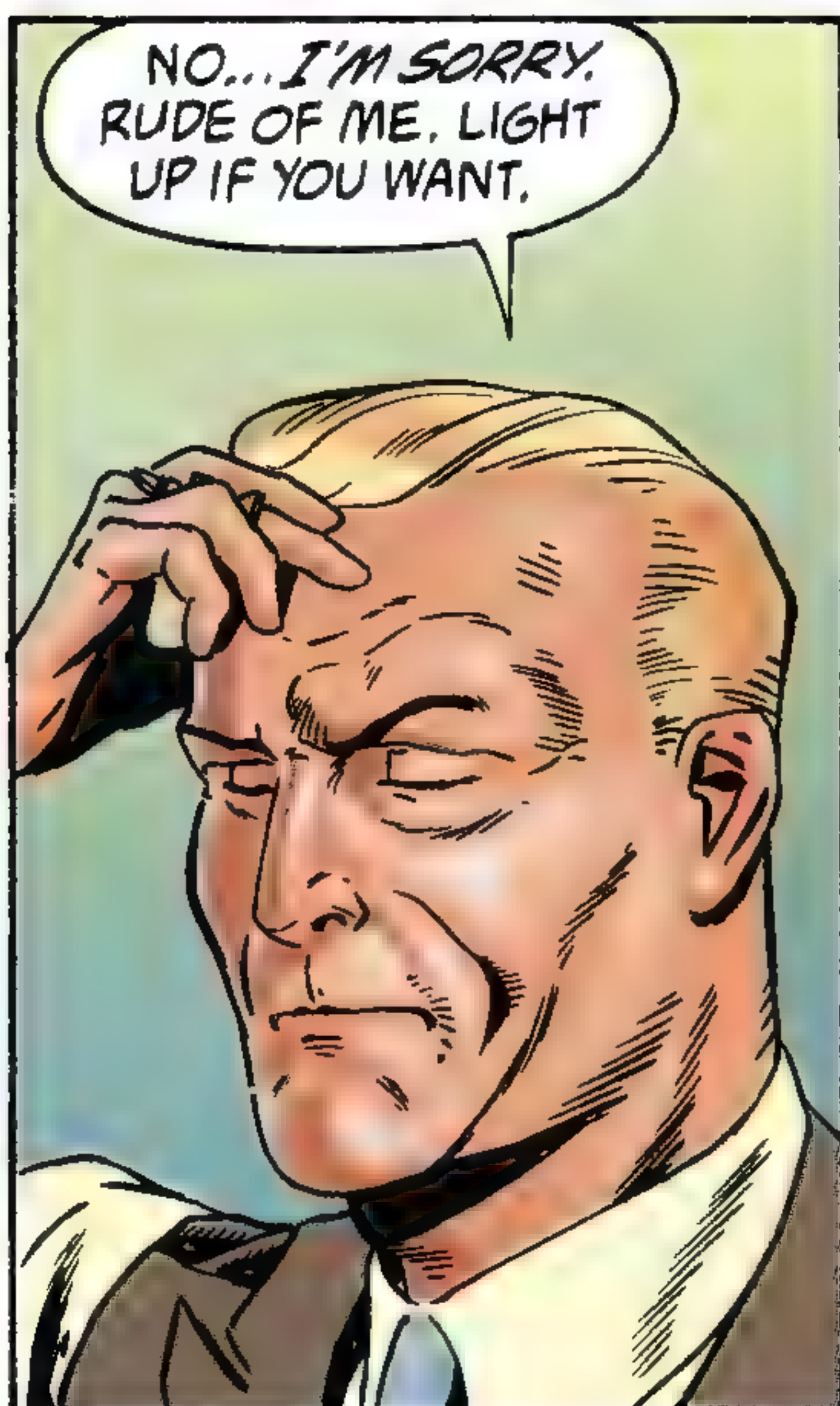
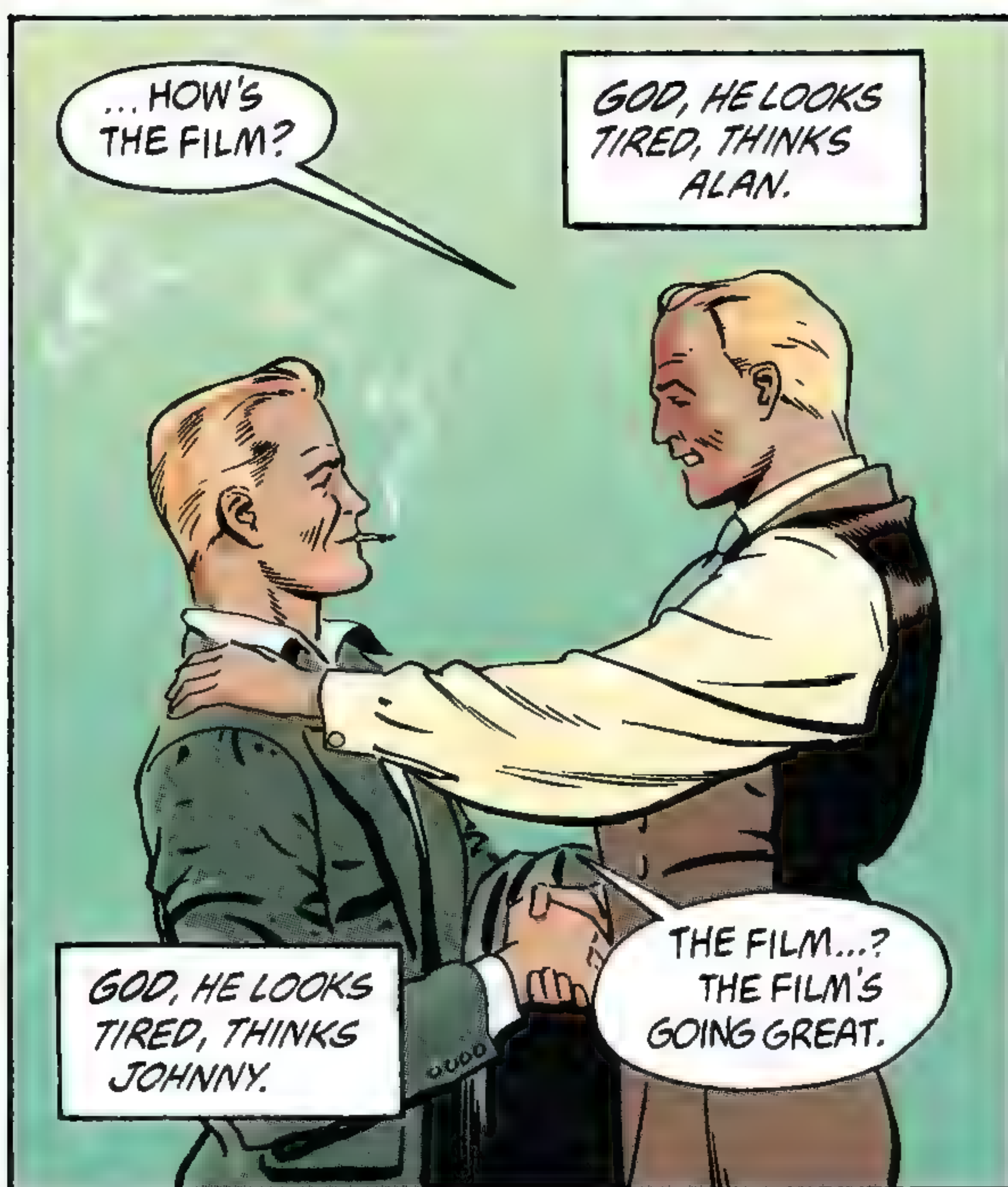


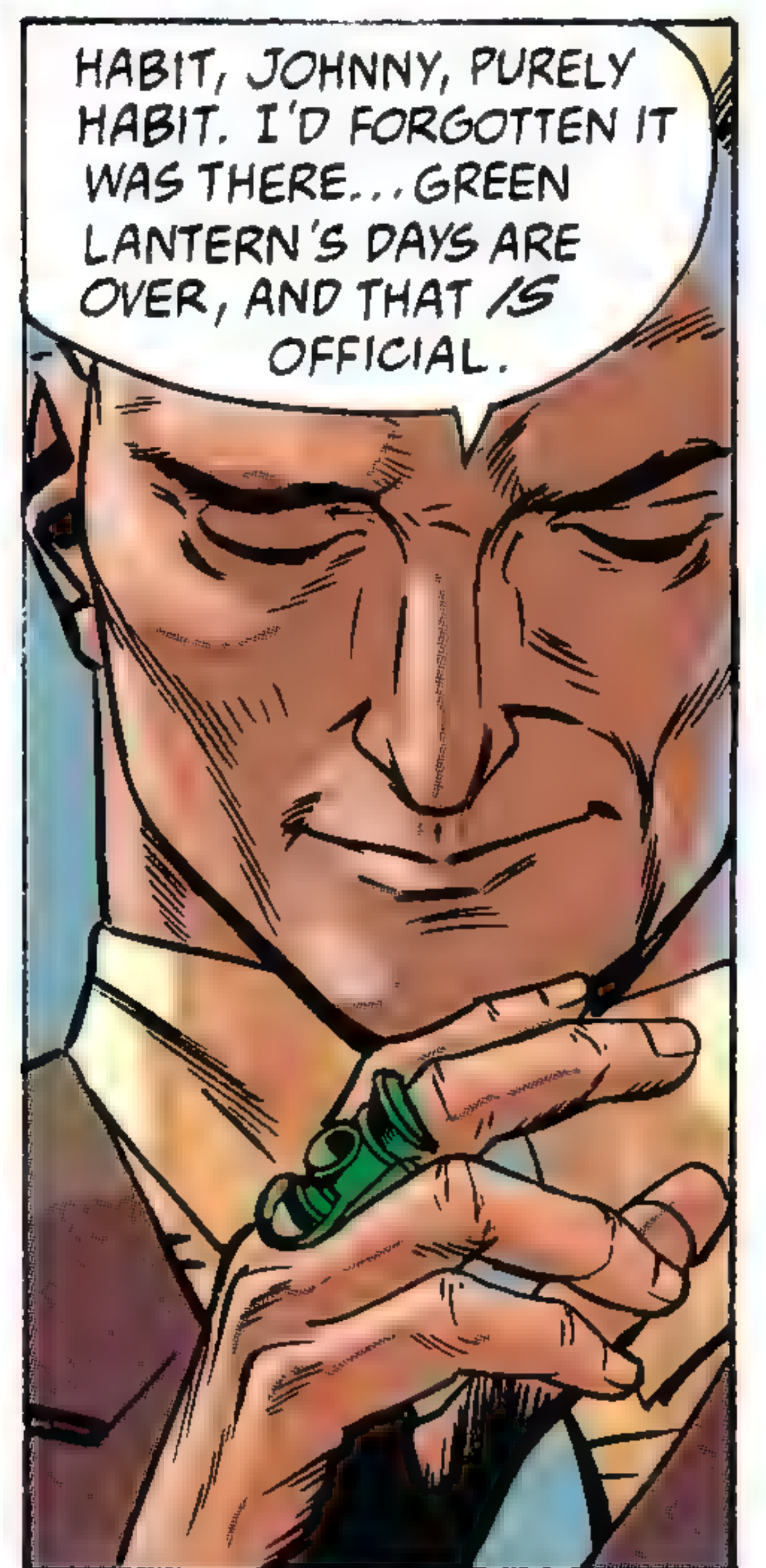
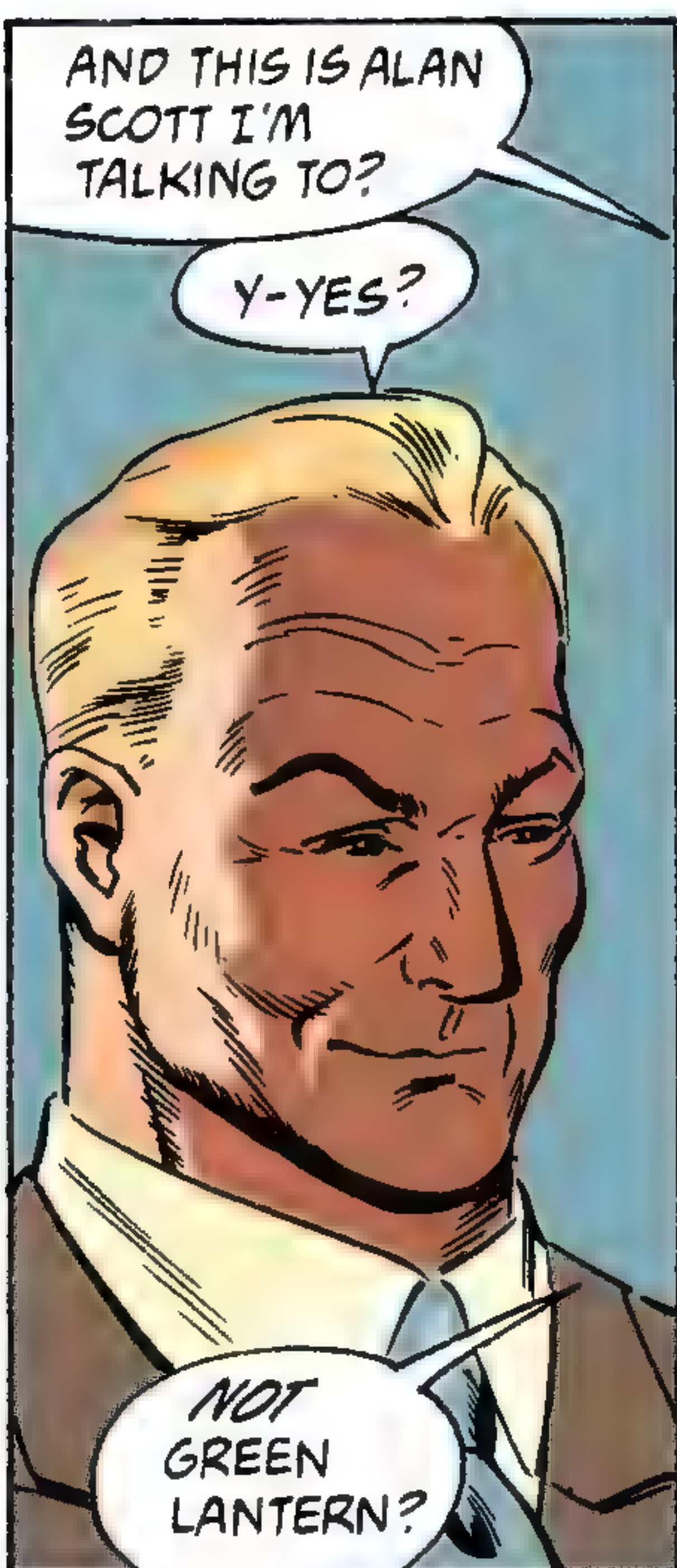
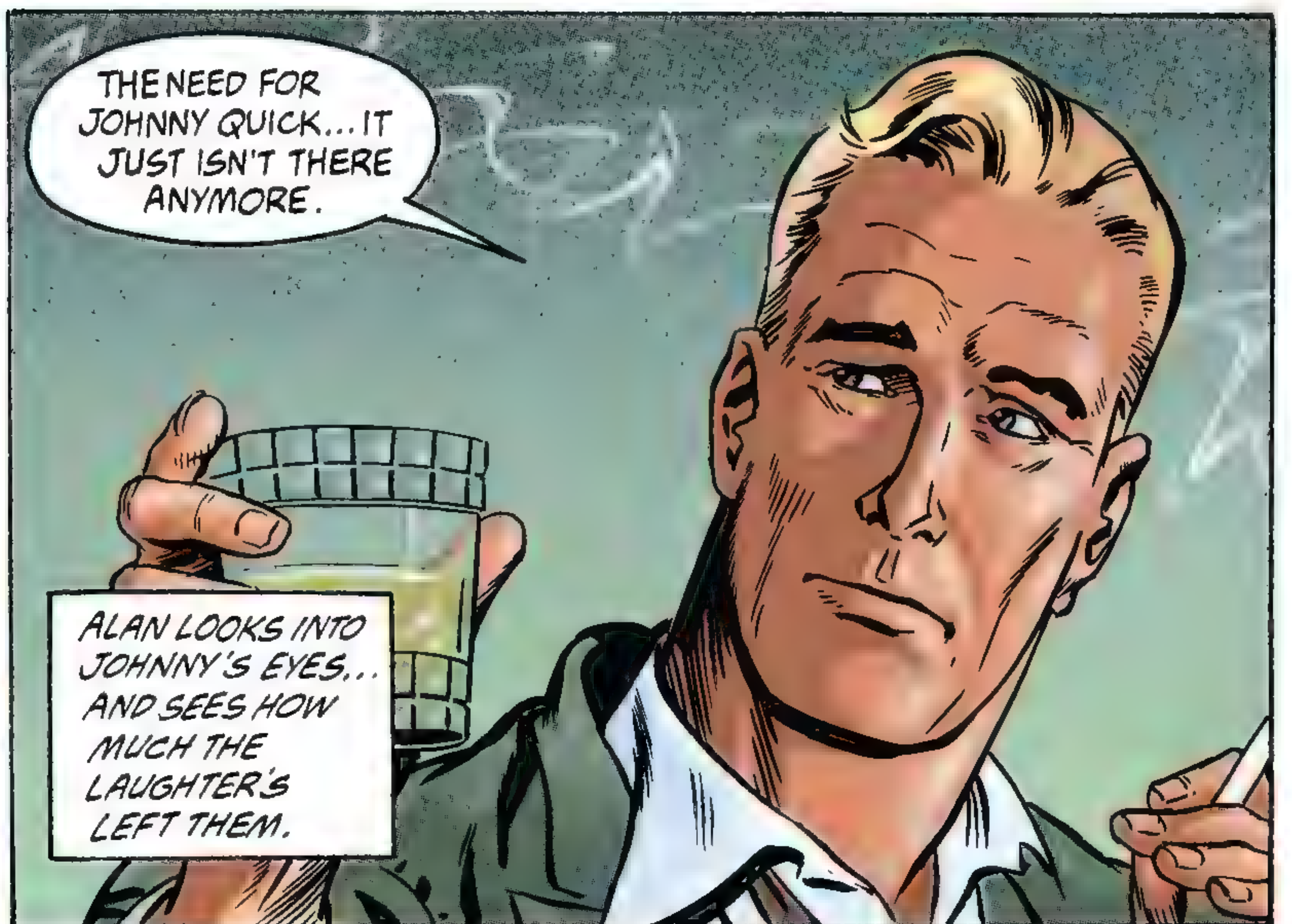
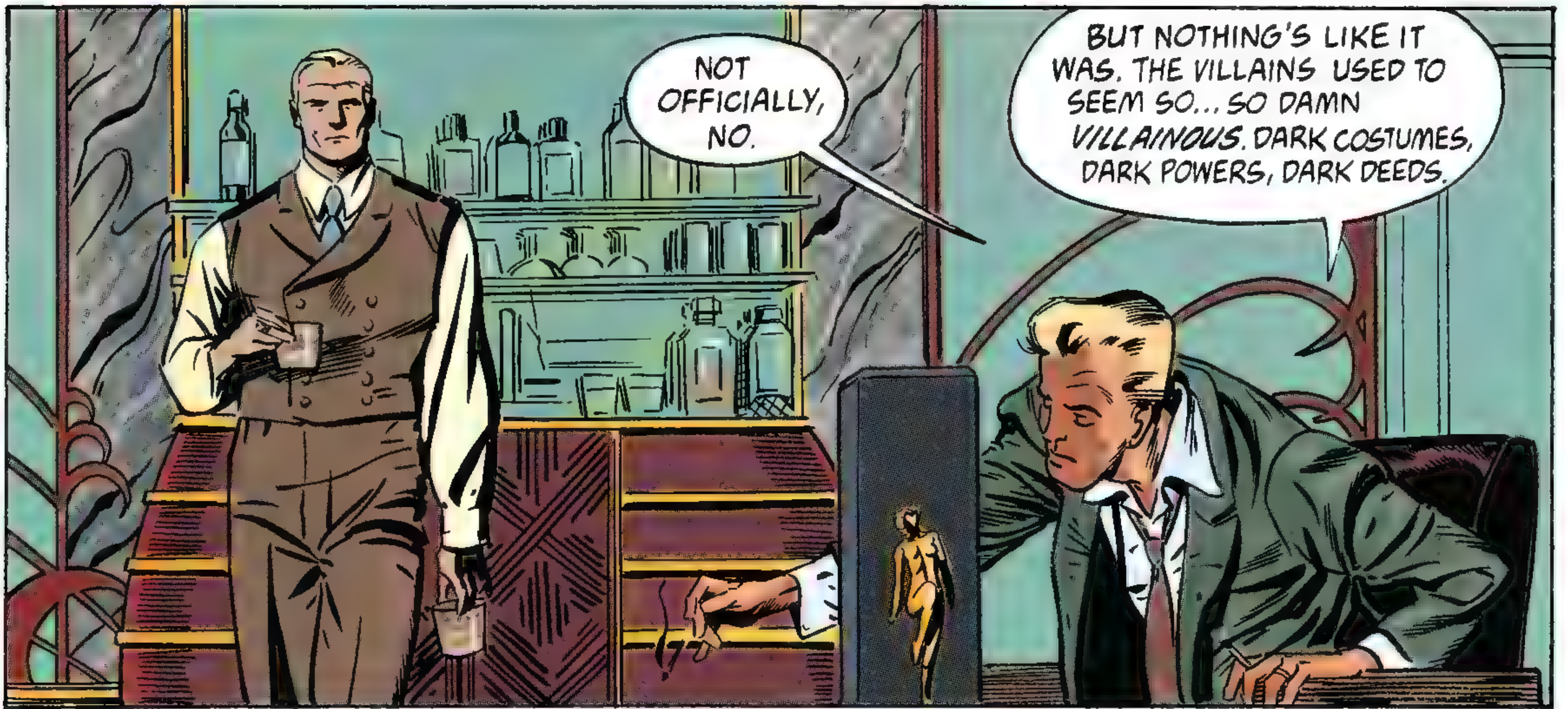
FIRE THEM? BETTER... SAFER FOR ME...?

WHEN HAVE I EVER PLAYED IT SAFE?

ALAN SCOTT'S SHOULDERS ACHE... AS IF THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD WERE ON THEM. YET ANOTHER TASK, HE THINKS AND SIGHS...







DO YOU REALIZE THE POWER I HAVE? I COULD LEVEL CITIES. IF NOT FOR OTTO FRENTZ, I COULD HAVE ENDED THE WAR IN AN AFTERNOON.

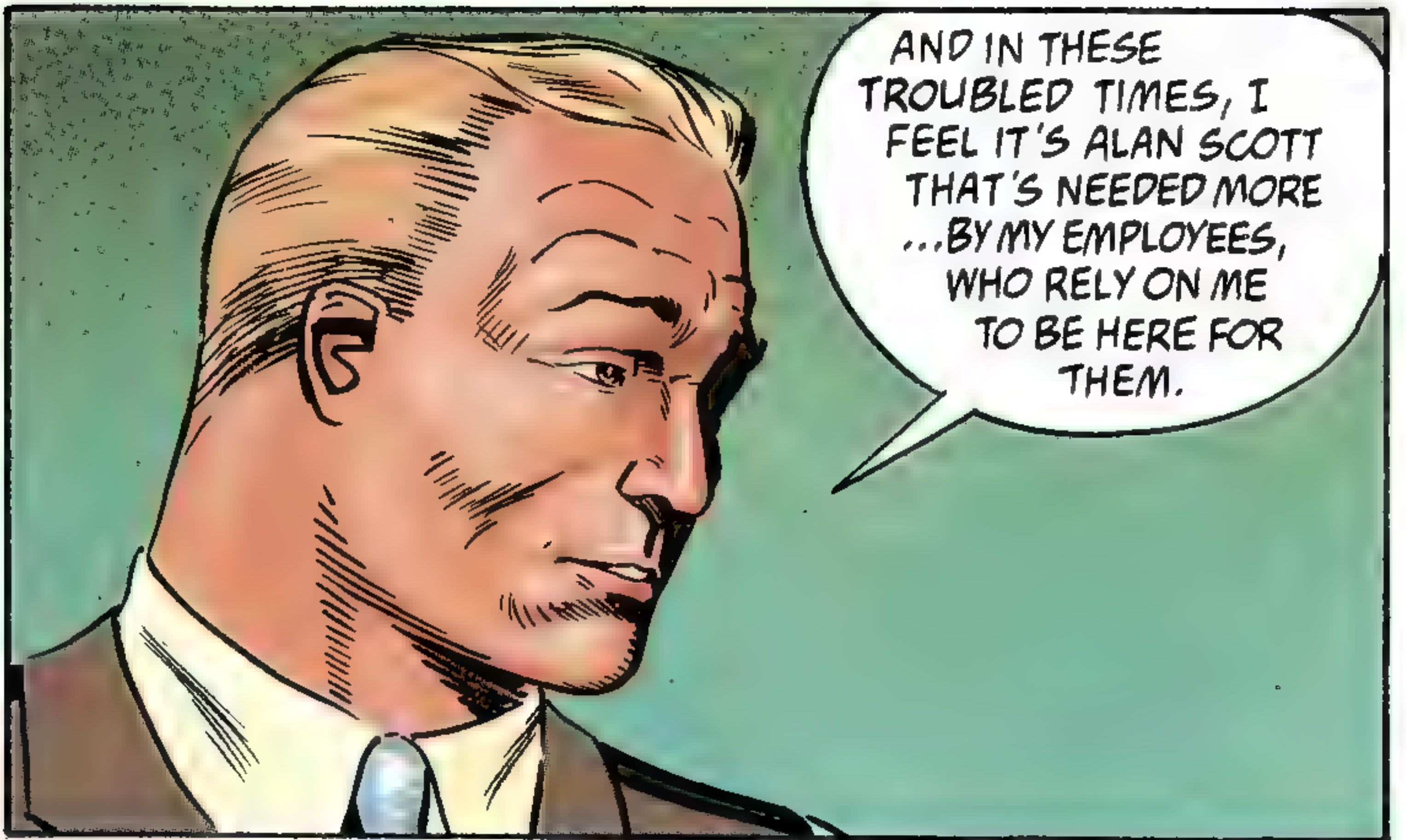
THE ATOM BOMB... YOU SAW WHAT IT DID... THE LIVES LOST, THE ASH AND BODIES. A FRACTION OF MY POWER... A FRACTION.

WHO DECIDED THE BOMB SHOULD BE DROPPED? MEN. WHAT RIGHT DID THEY HAVE TO UNLEASH SUCH DEVASTATION ON THE WORLD? WE WON THE WAR, YES... BUT WHO'S TO SAY WE WERE MORALLY RIGHT?

I HAVE POWER FAR GREATER THAN THE BOMB. WHAT MORAL RIGHT DO I HAVE TO IT...? WHAT IF I ERRED ONE DAY AND A CITY DIED?

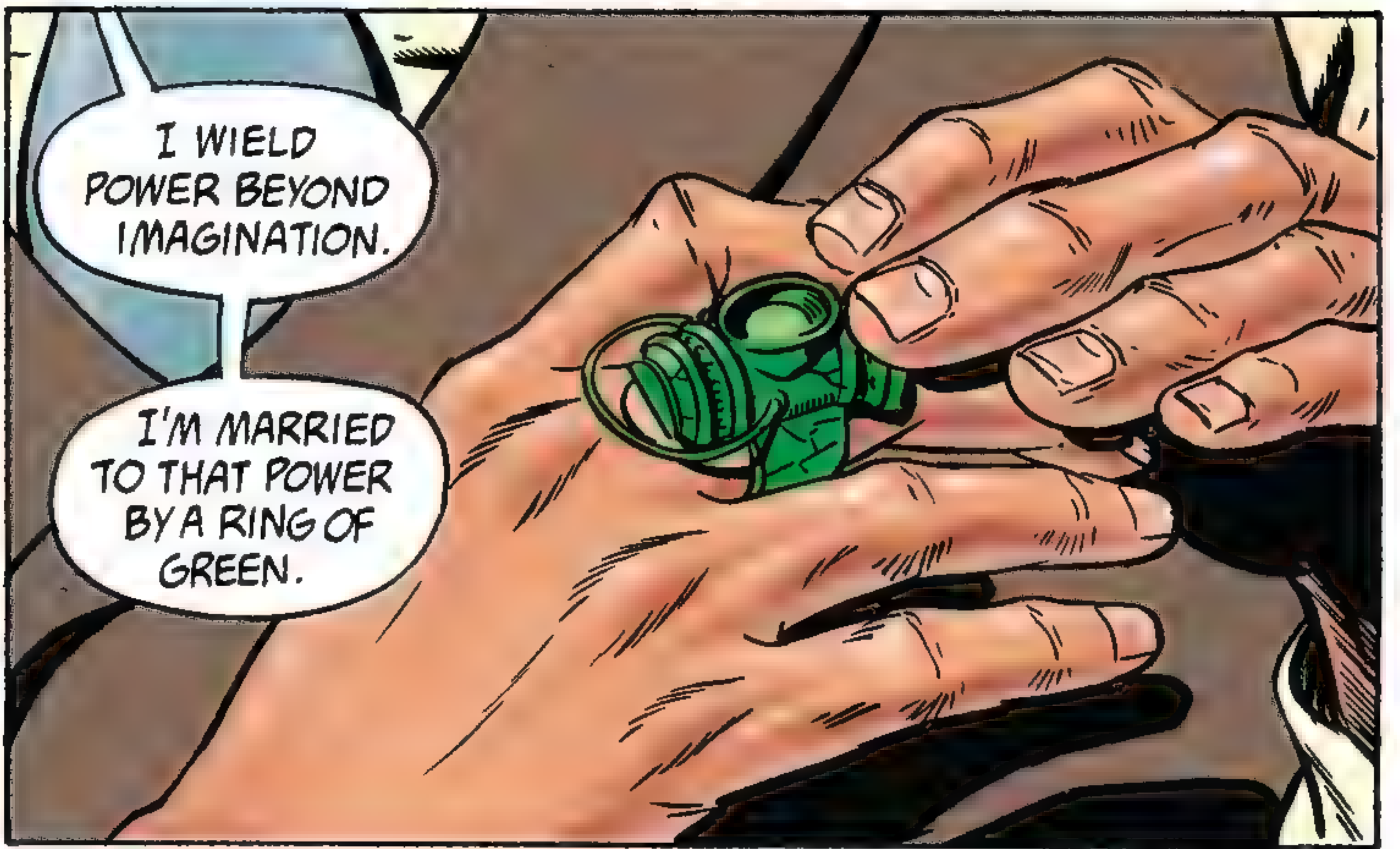


AND IN THESE TROUBLED TIMES, I FEEL IT'S ALAN SCOTT THAT'S NEEDED MORE... BY MY EMPLOYEES, WHO RELY ON ME TO BE HERE FOR THEM.



I WIELD POWER BEYOND IMAGINATION.

I'M MARRIED TO THAT POWER BY A RING OF GREEN.

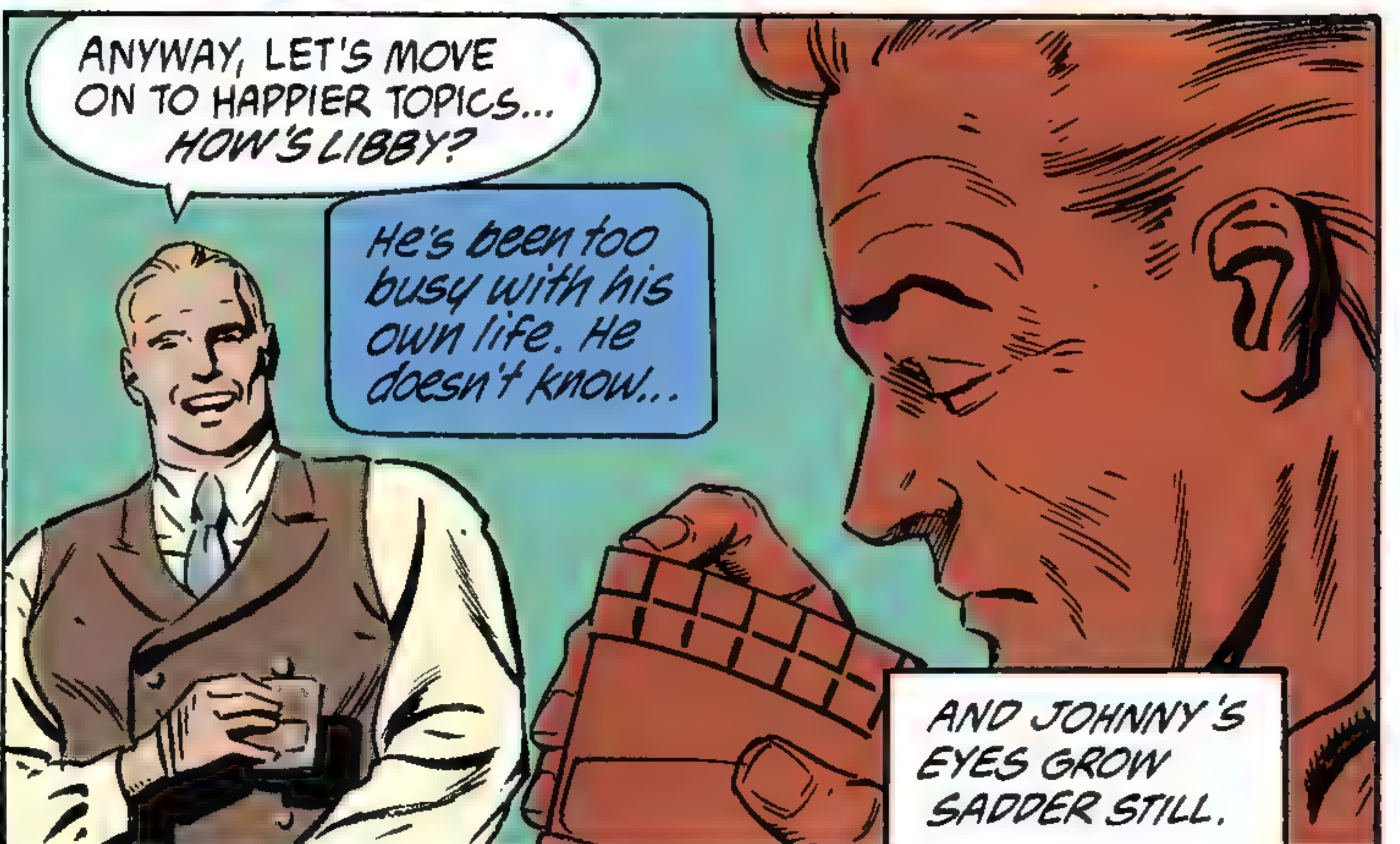


I WANT A DIVORCE.

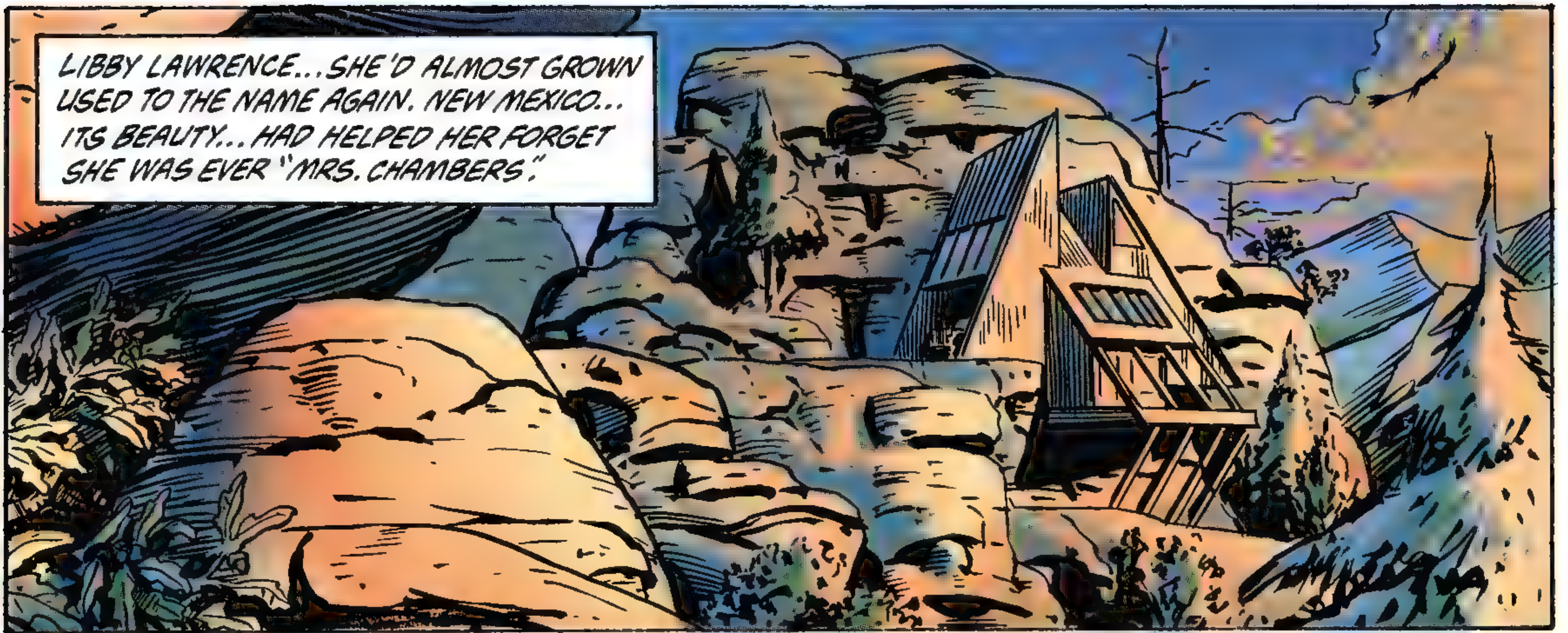


ANYWAY, LET'S MOVE ON TO HAPPIER TOPICS... HOW'S LIBBY?

He's been too busy with his own life. He doesn't know...



AND JOHNNY'S EYES GROW SADDER STILL.

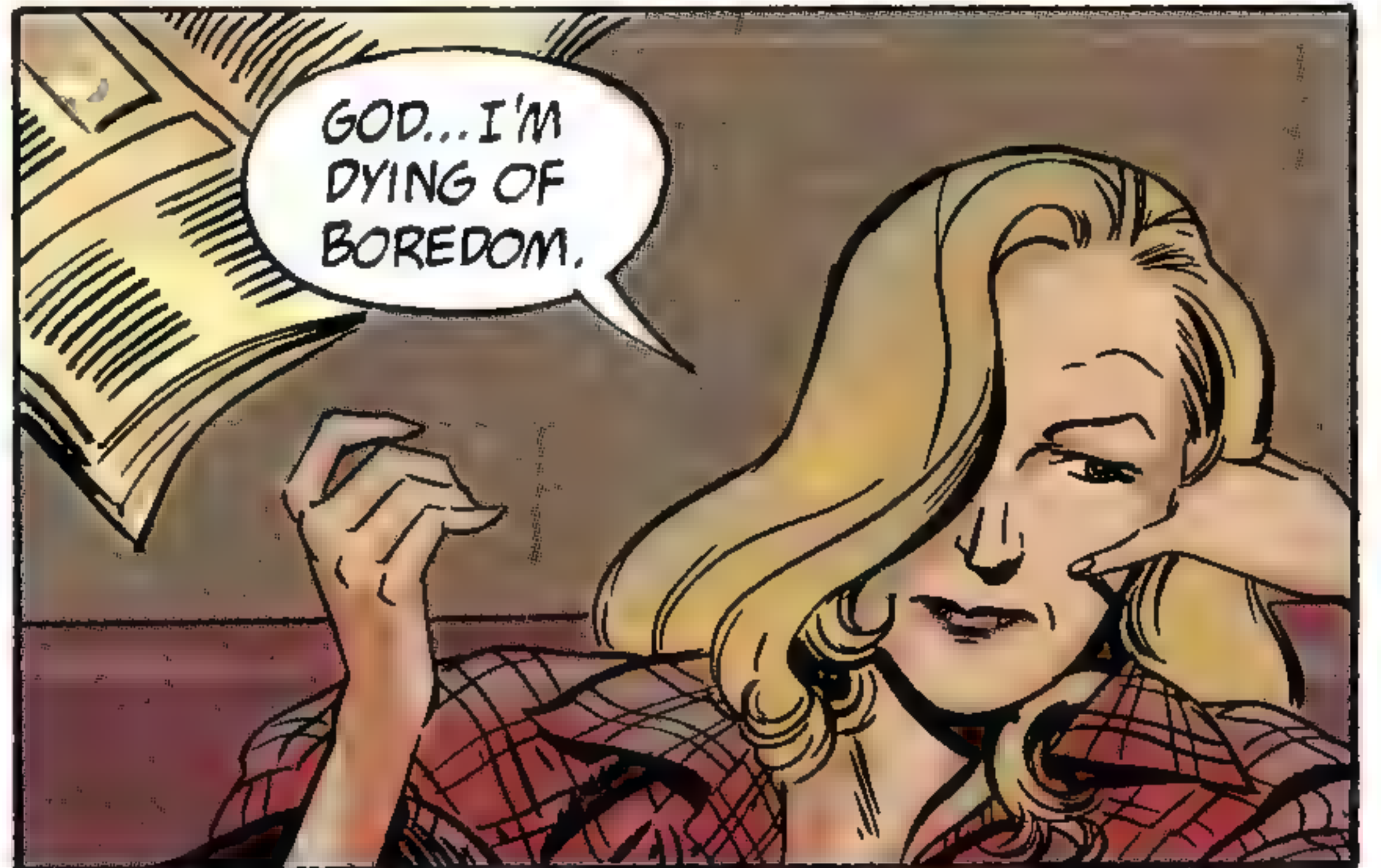


LIBBY LAWRENCE... SHE'D ALMOST GROWN USED TO THE NAME AGAIN. NEW MEXICO... ITS BEAUTY... HAD HELPED HER FORGET SHE WAS EVER "MRS. CHAMBERS."



JOHNNY AND LIBBY WERE MARRIED DURING THE PASSIONATE DESPERATION OF WARTIME. PEACE LOOMED, AND THE MARRIAGE HIT A SNAG... JOHNNY'S IRREVERENCE TO LIFE AND THE PROSPECT OF SETTLING DOWN.

LIBBY FELT SHE WANTED STABILITY. SHE FOUND IT IN ANOTHER HERO'S ARMS.

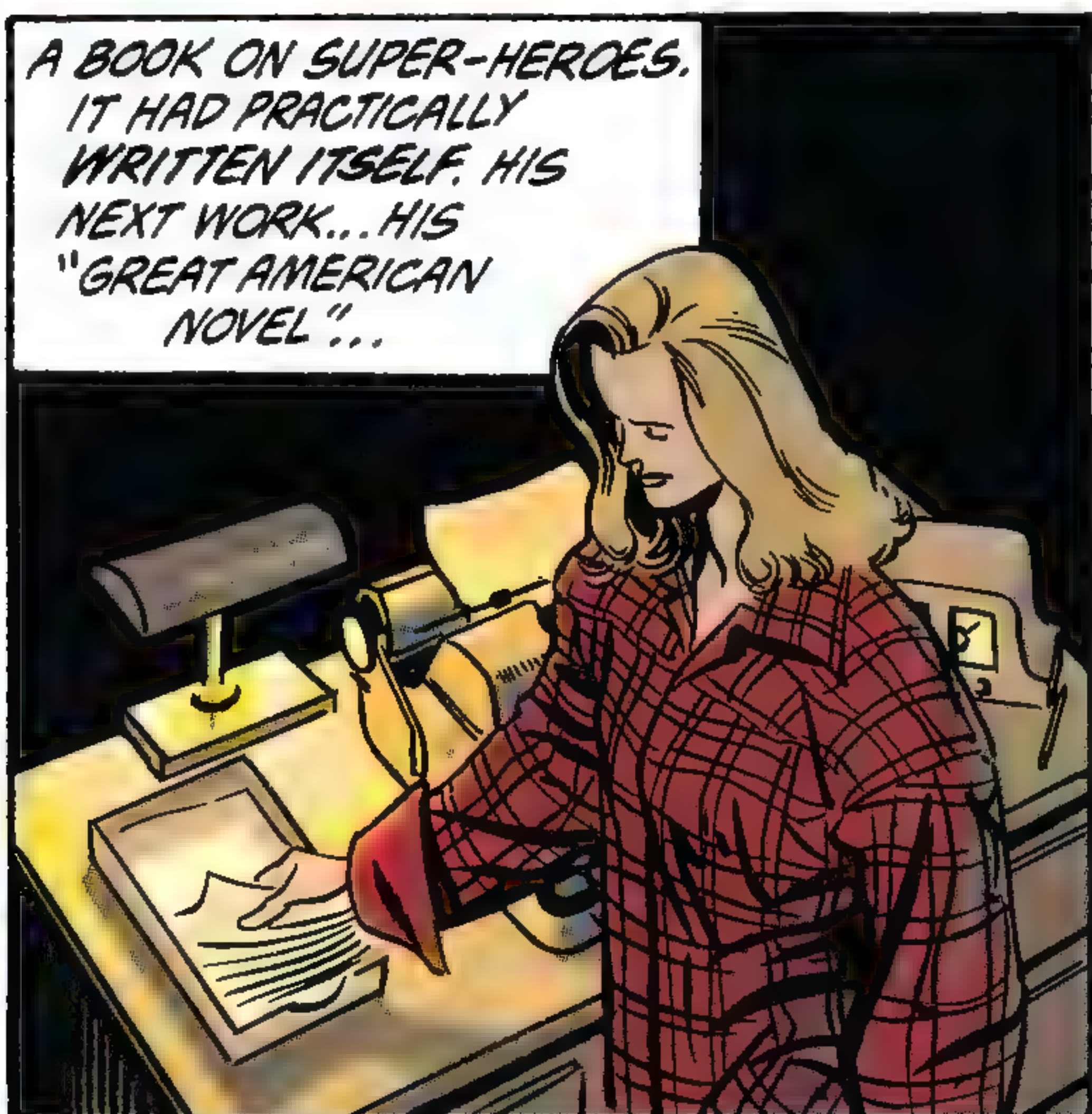


GOD... I'M DYING OF BOREDOM.



MOST MYSTERY MEN BECAME ONE FROM SOME DRIVING NEED... FOR REVENGE... ATONEMENT. JONATHAN LAW BECAME THE TARANTULA...

...TO RESEARCH A BOOK.

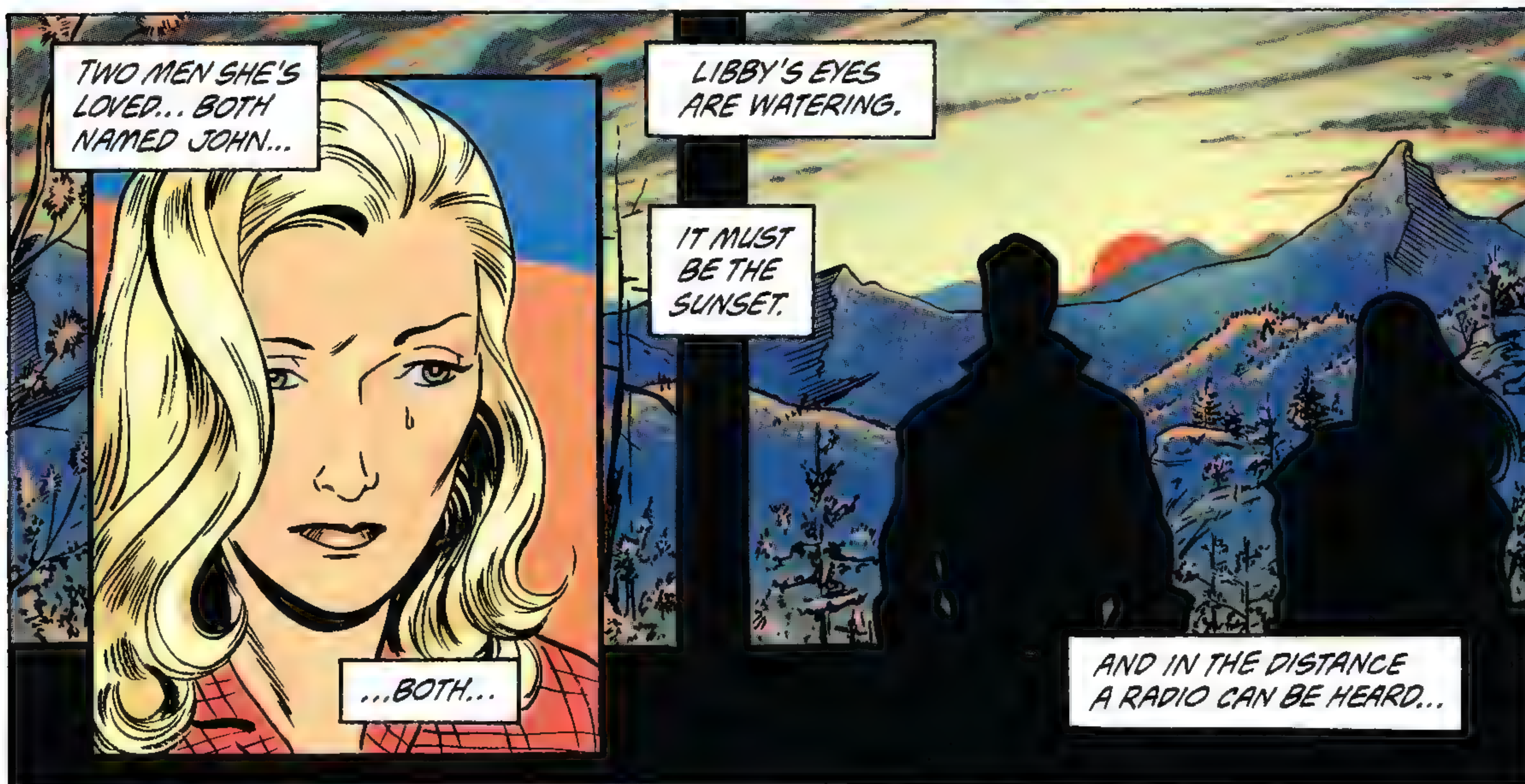
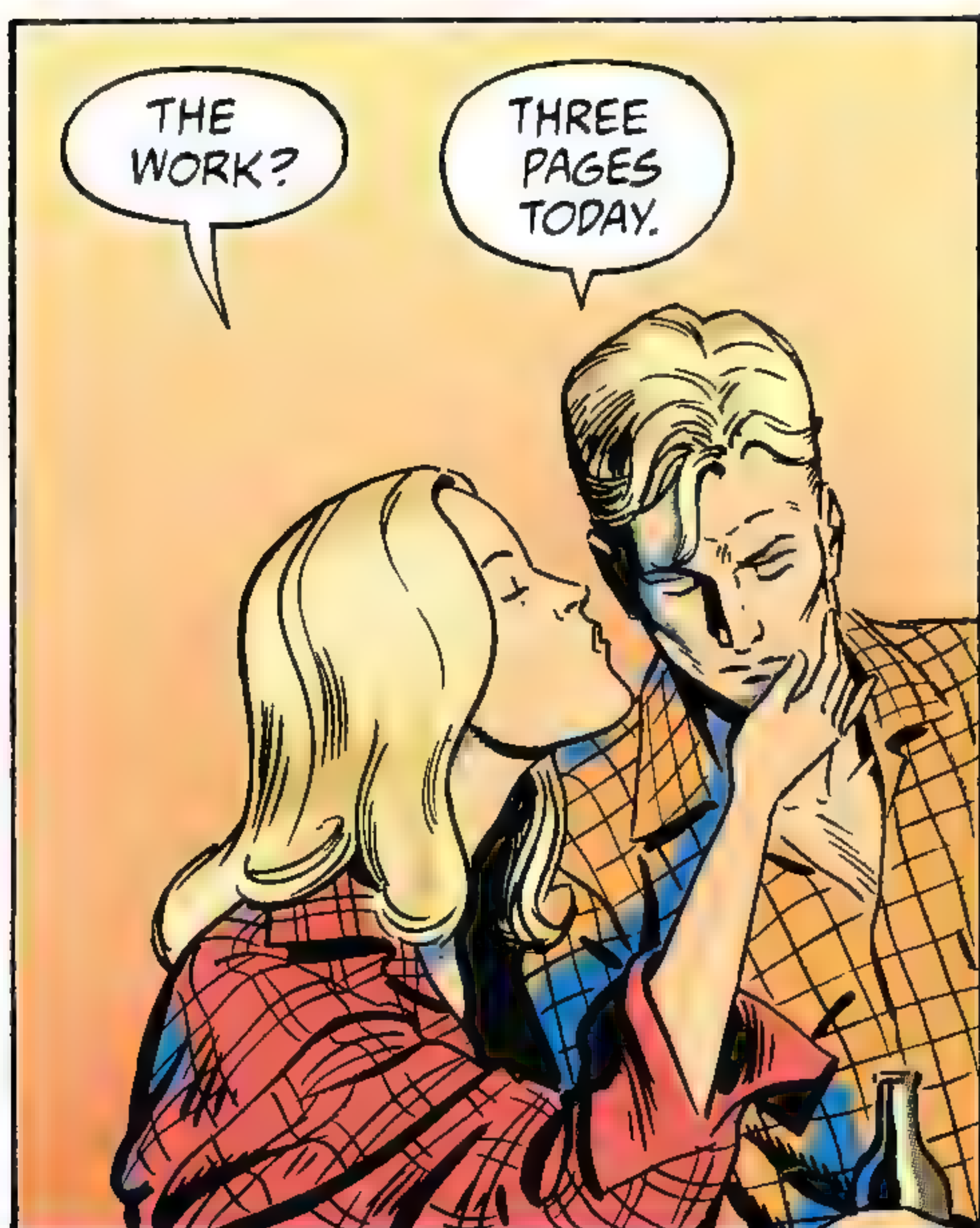
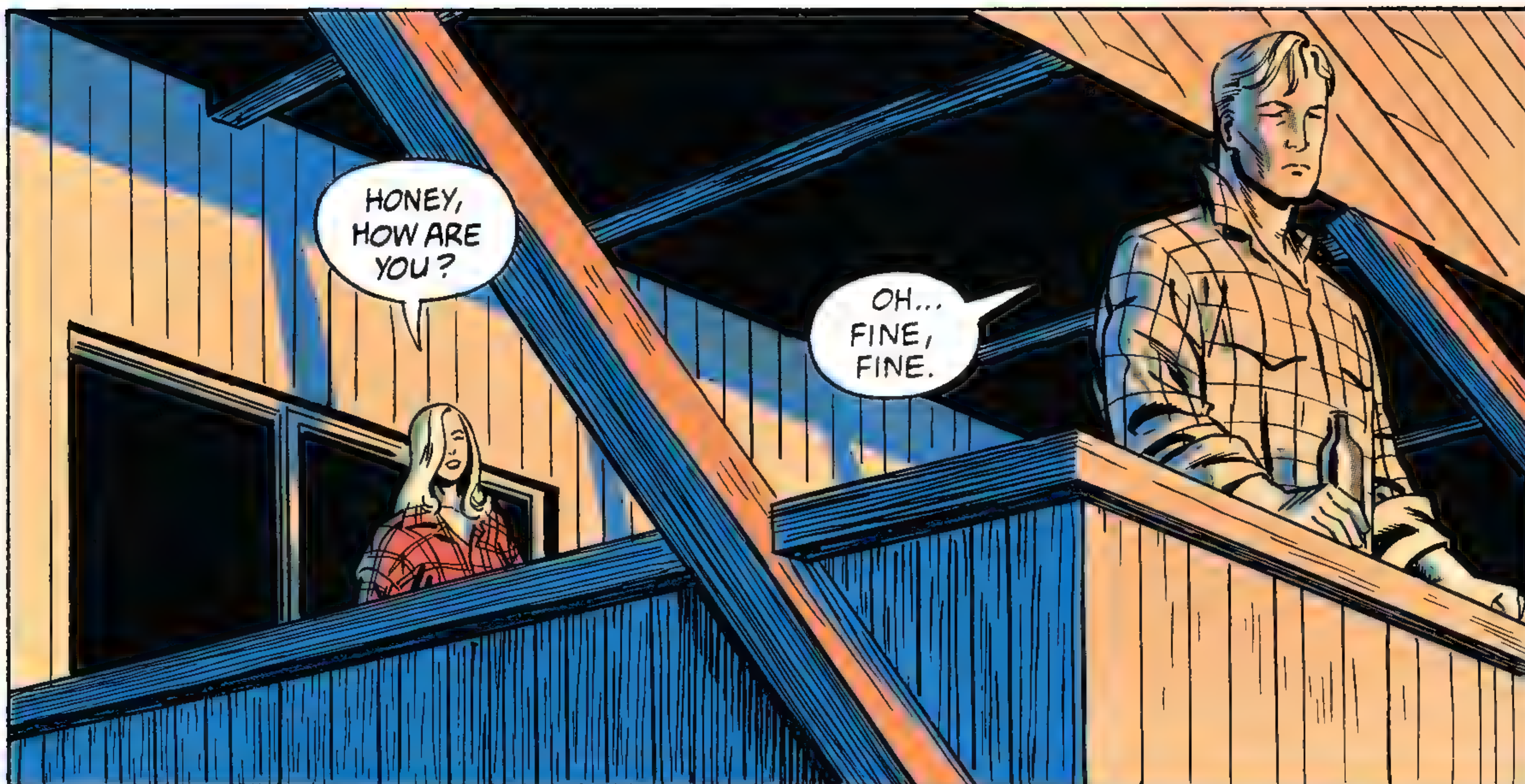


A BOOK ON SUPER-HEROES. IT HAD PRACTICALLY WRITTEN ITSELF. HIS NEXT WORK... HIS "GREAT AMERICAN NOVEL"...



...WAS PROVING A LITTLE HARDER.





...THE VOICE COMING FROM
IT IS FAINT BUT DISTINCT.
IT'S THOMPSON'S.

AMERICA NEEDS A
CHAMPION. A FRESH
FACE FOR THIS
FRESH NEW AGE.

THE NEW MEXICO
EVENING IS WARM.

IT ISN'T, IN RHODE ISLAND.

I'VE TRAVELLED. I'VE
SEEN THE COUNTRY. YOU,
THE PEOPLE, WANT--DESERVE--
MORE. DIDN'T YOU FIGHT
FOR THAT...? DIE FOR
THAT?

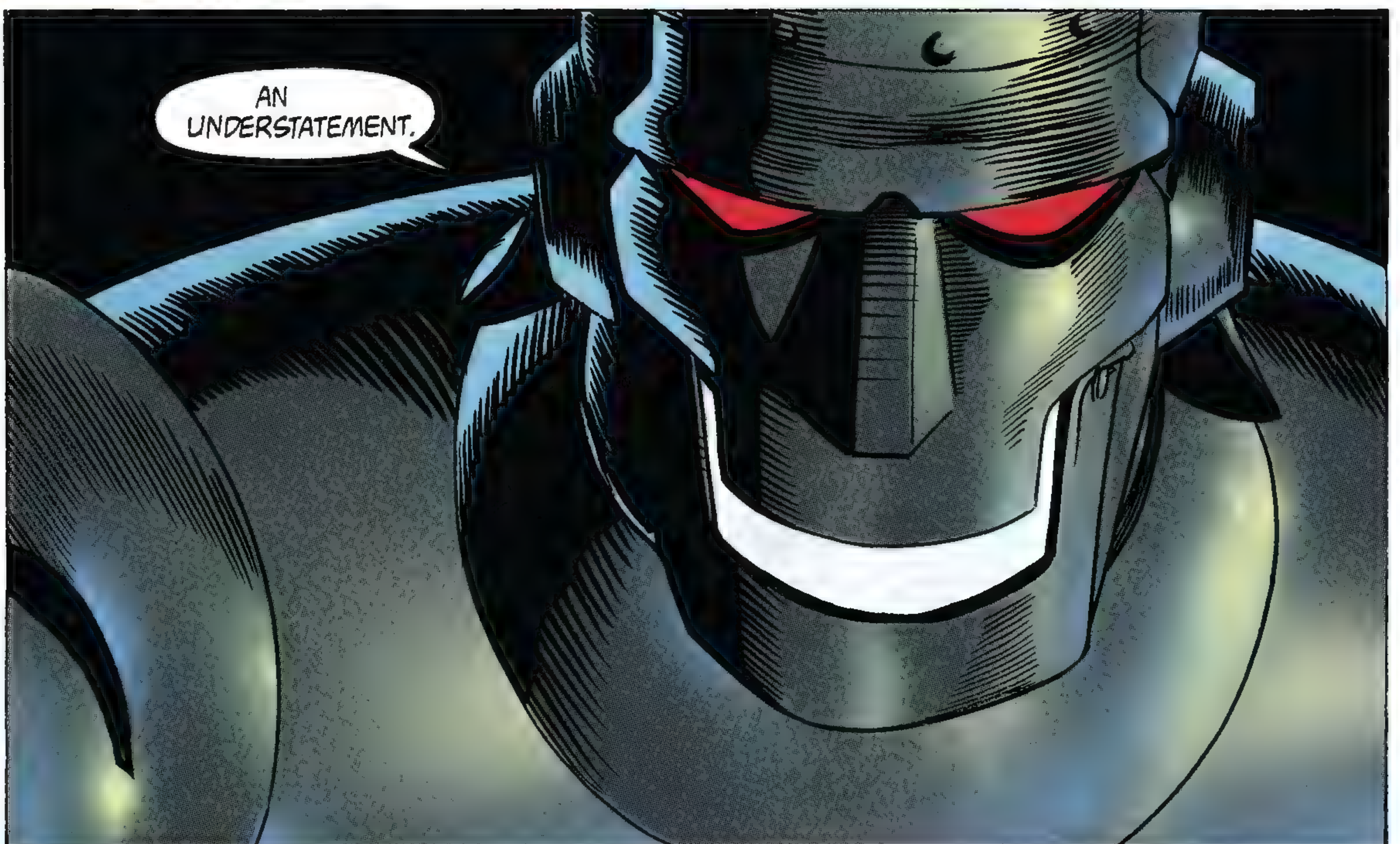
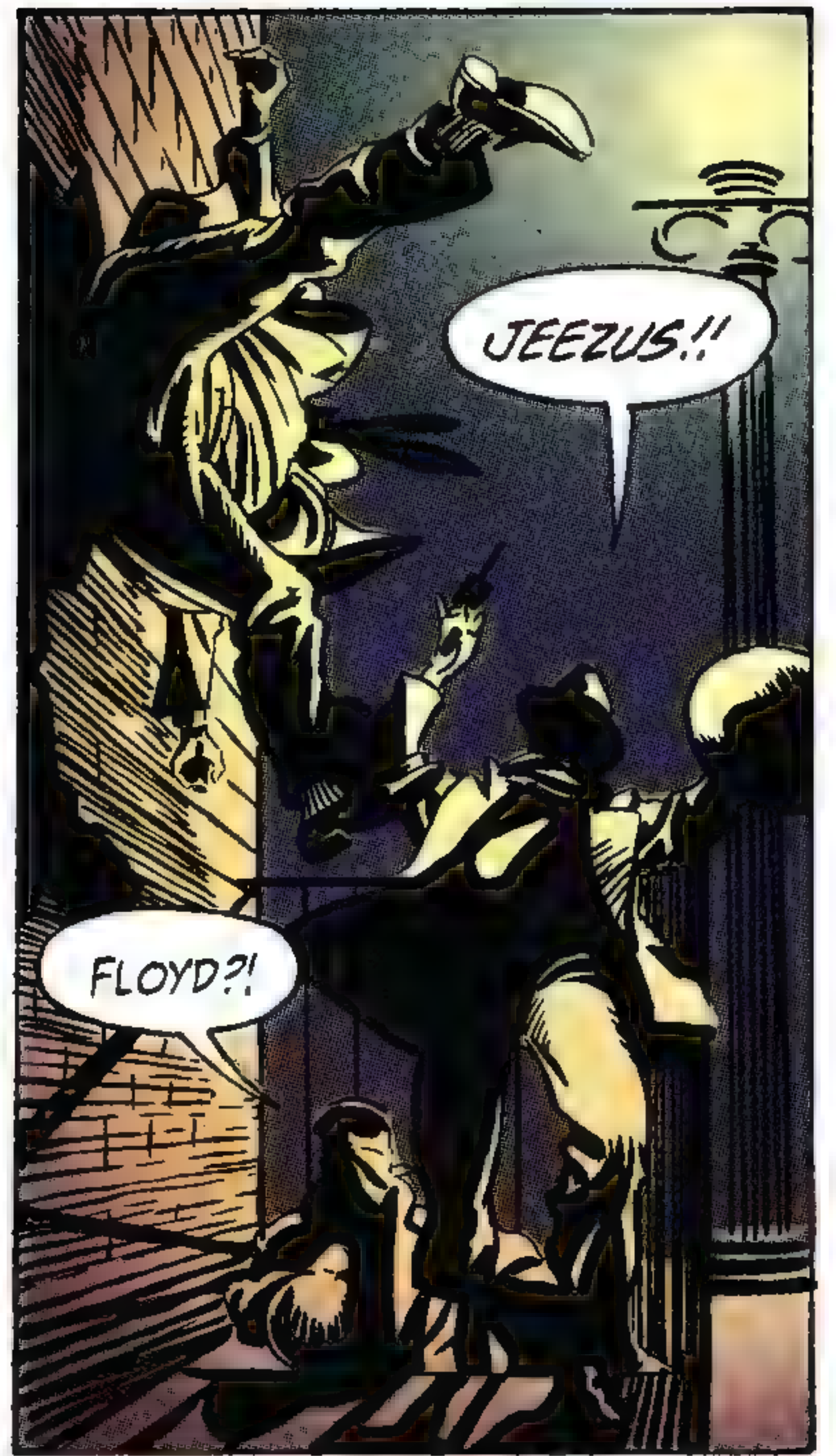
IN THE SAME WAY THAT
EVERY AMERICAN DESERVES
AN EDUCATION AND A HOME
IN THIS BRIGHT FUTURE...
DON'T YOU ALSO DESERVE
A CHAMPION TO PROTECT
THAT TOMORROW?

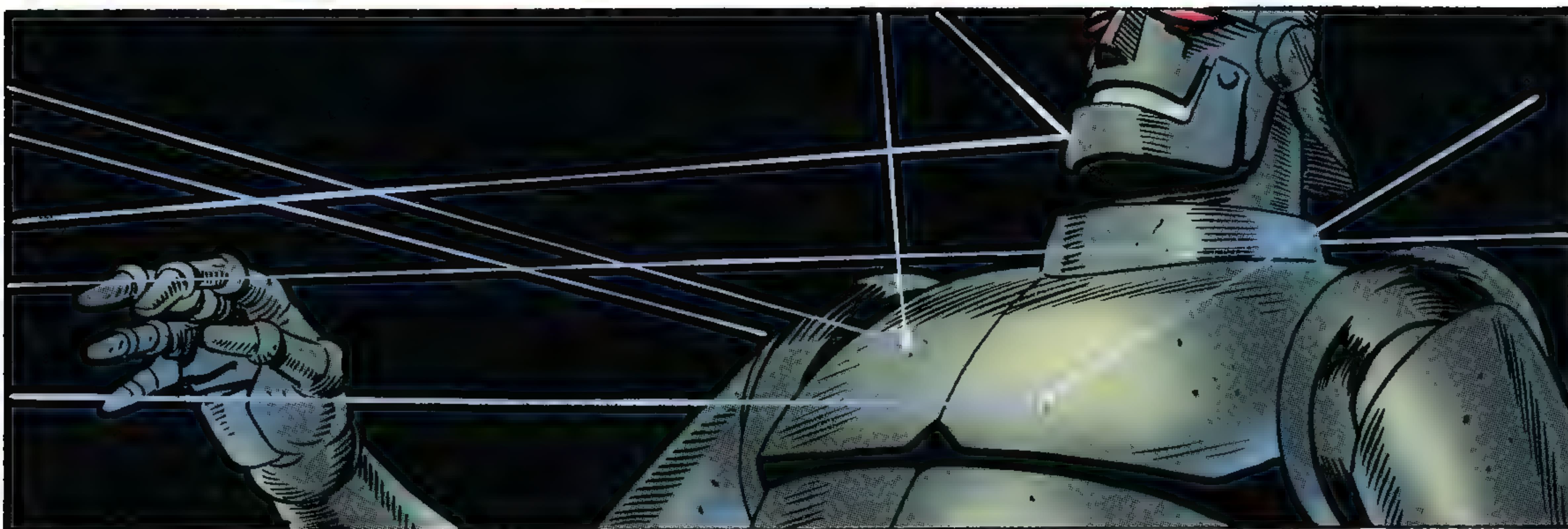
TO INSURE THAT
FUTURE IS *EVER*
SHINING BEFORE US?

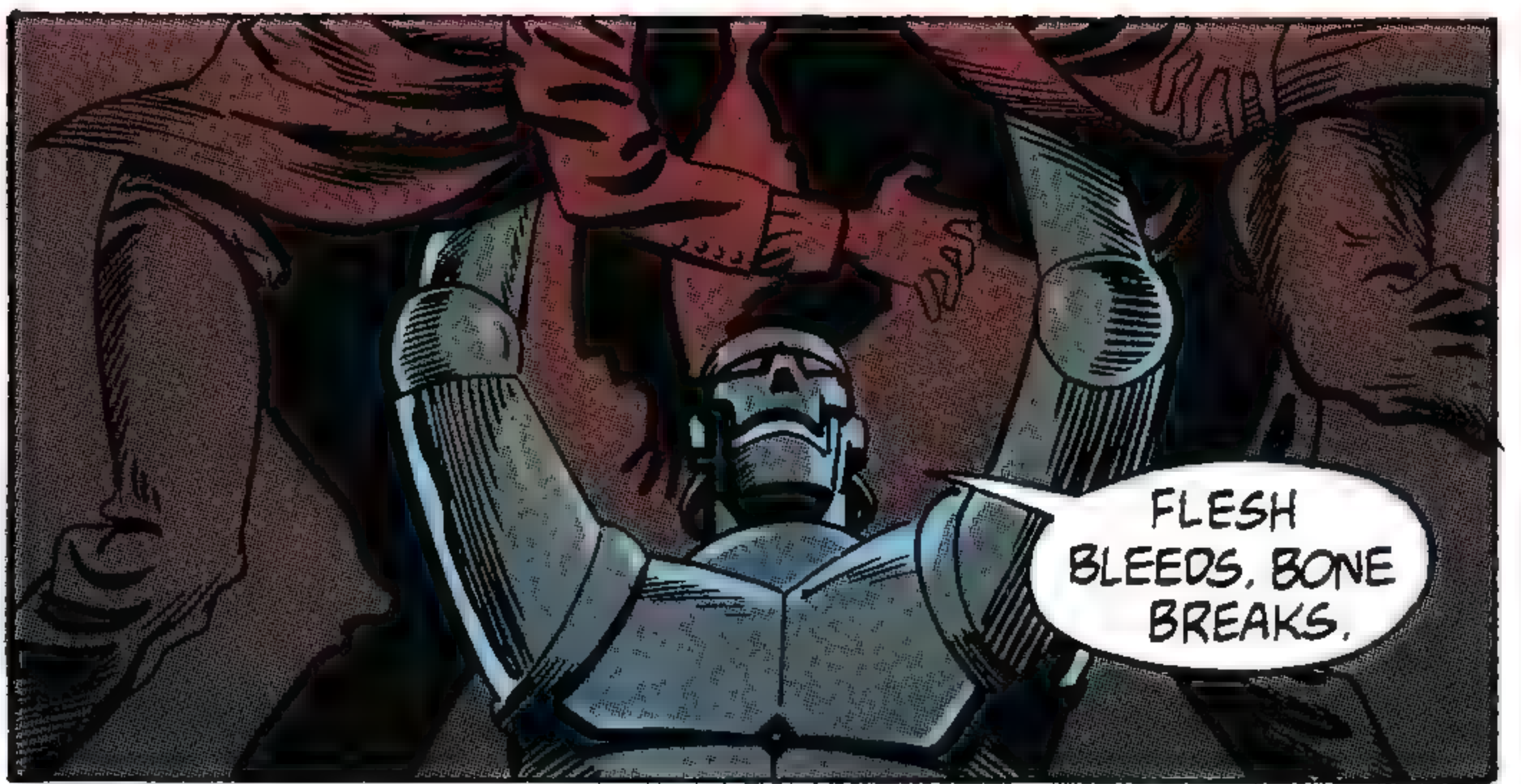
I IMPLORE THE
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT
TO BEGIN DEVELOPING THE
TECHNOLOGY FOR SUCH
A BEING...

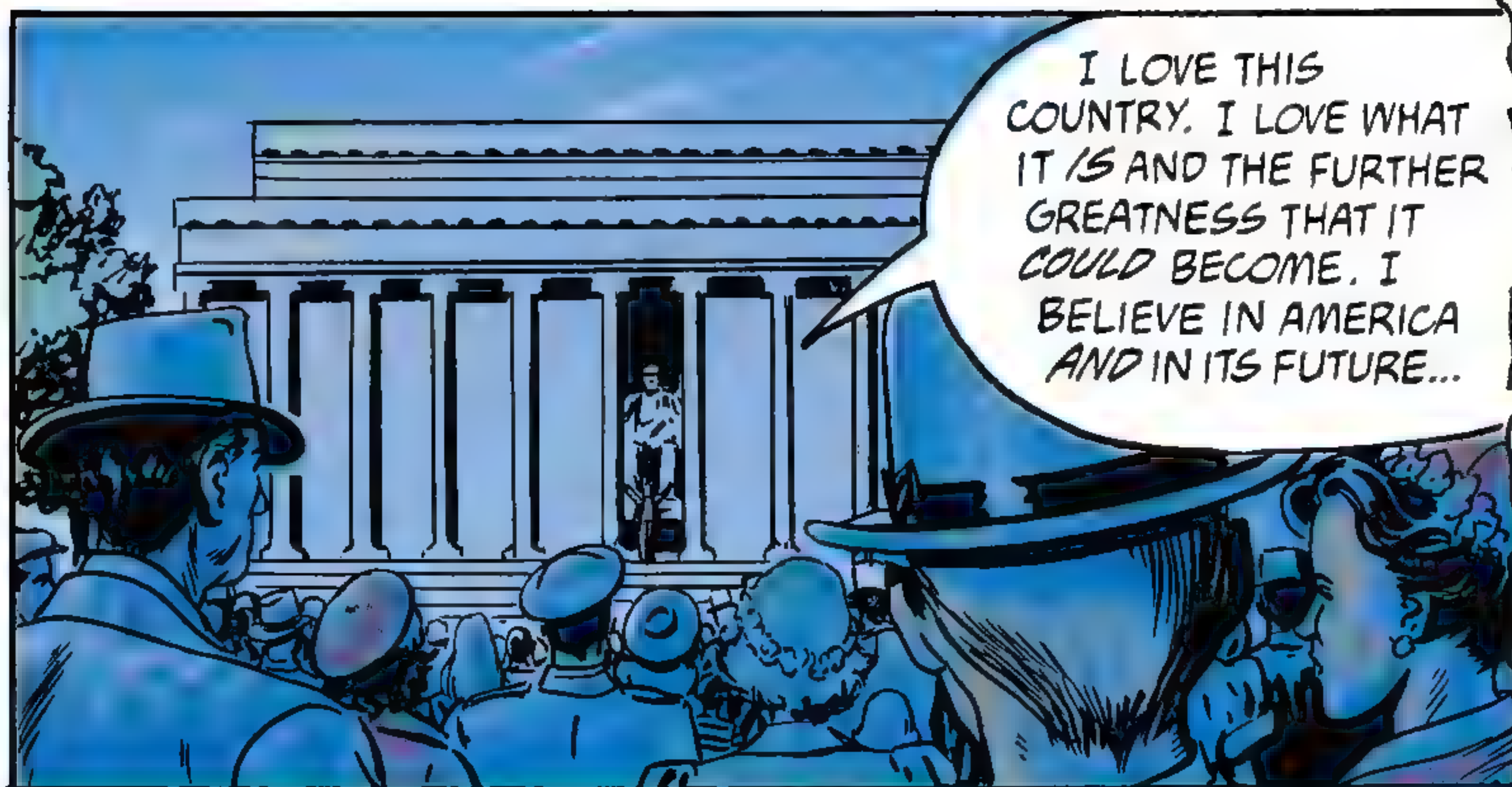
NOR IS IT WARM IN CHICAGO...
WHERE CHILL WINDS MAKE
CRIME ALL THE MORE COLD-
BLOODED.

1804
SOLOMON'S
JEWELRY









Thompson took the dais with the eloquent confidence the nation has come to expect. From the moment he opened his mouth, his audience was transfixed—entranced.

Thompson's tone differed slightly this time. Charming as ever, he began by covering familiar ground for those who've followed his speeches, speaking of his love of America and his hopes for the years to come.

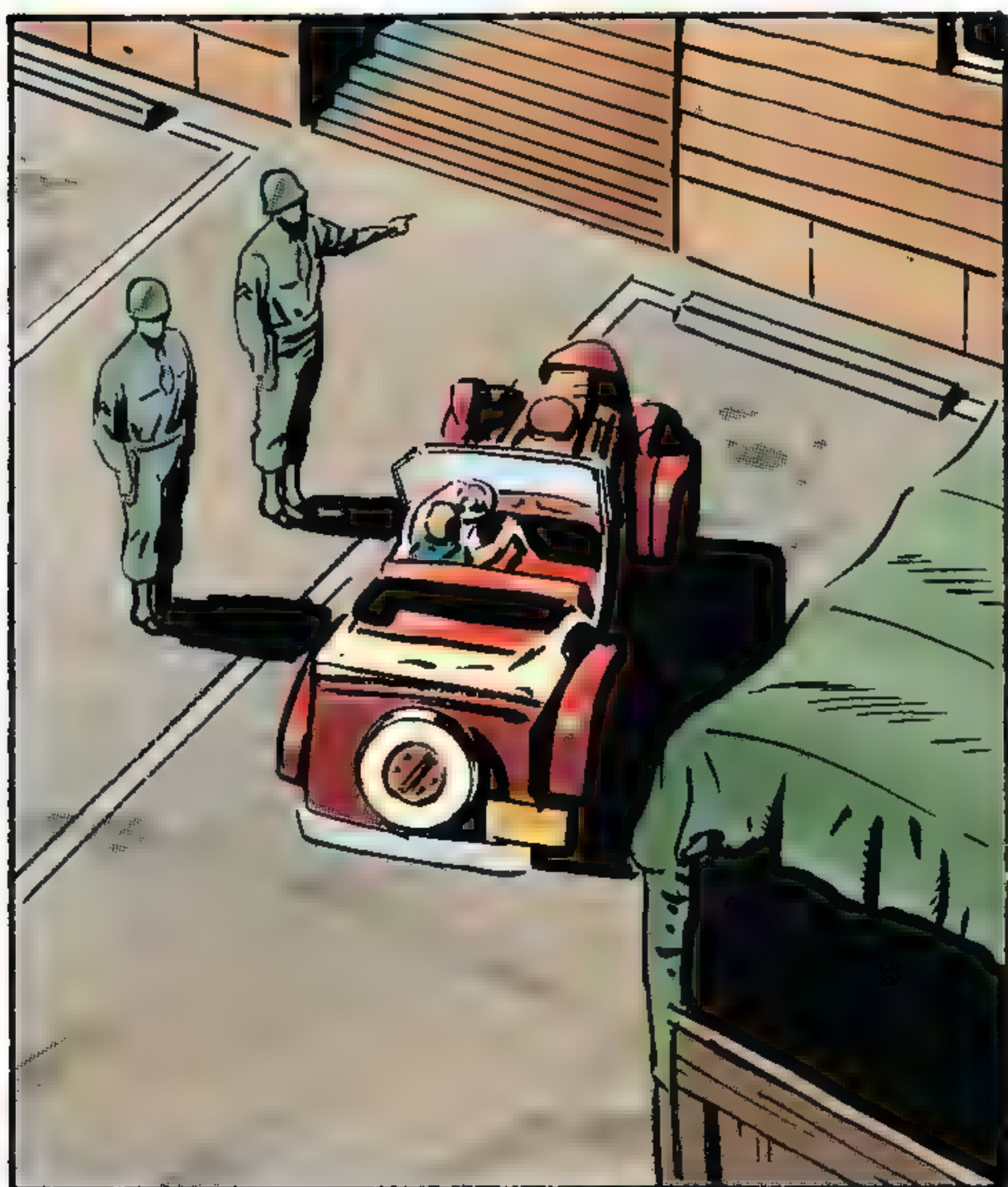
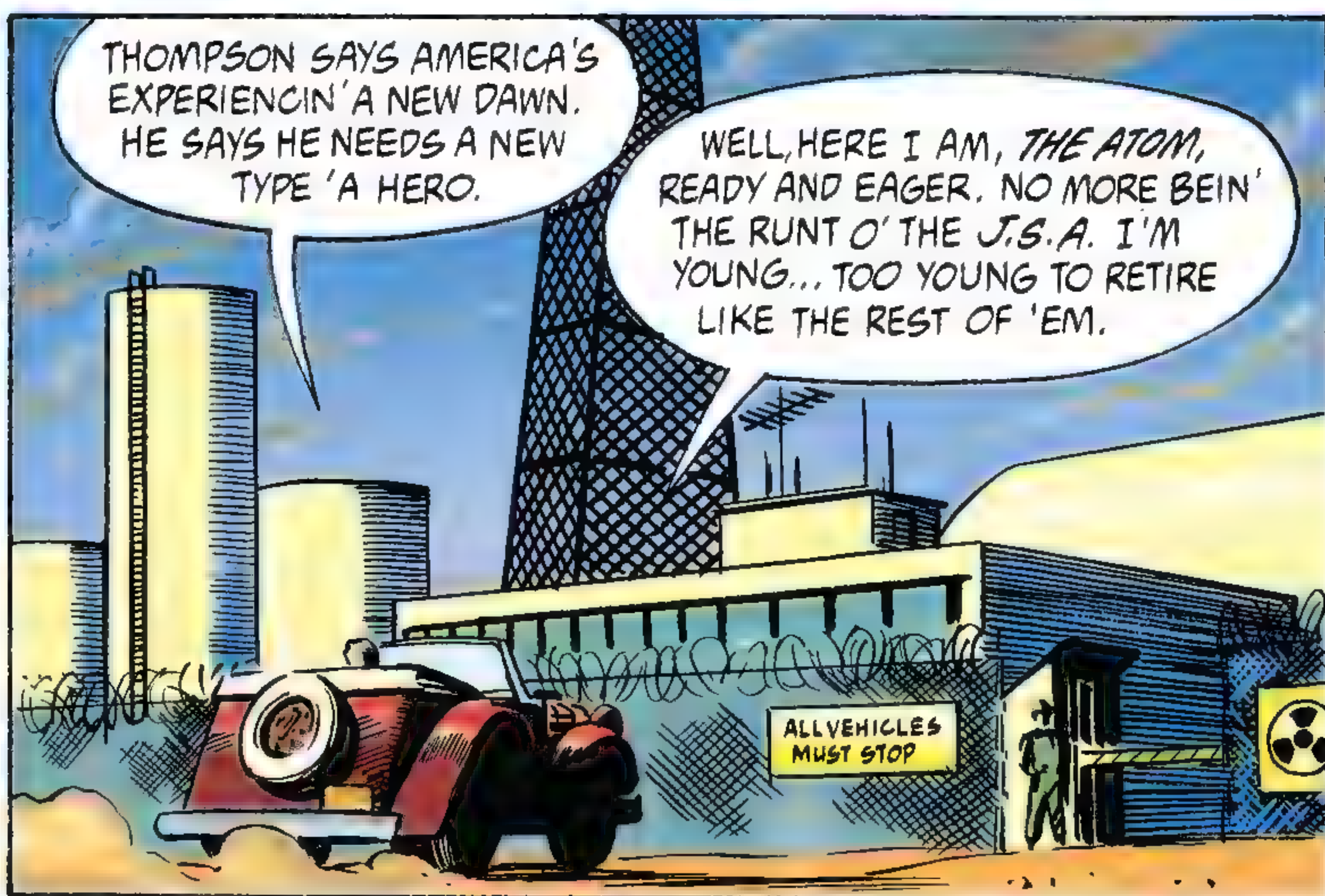
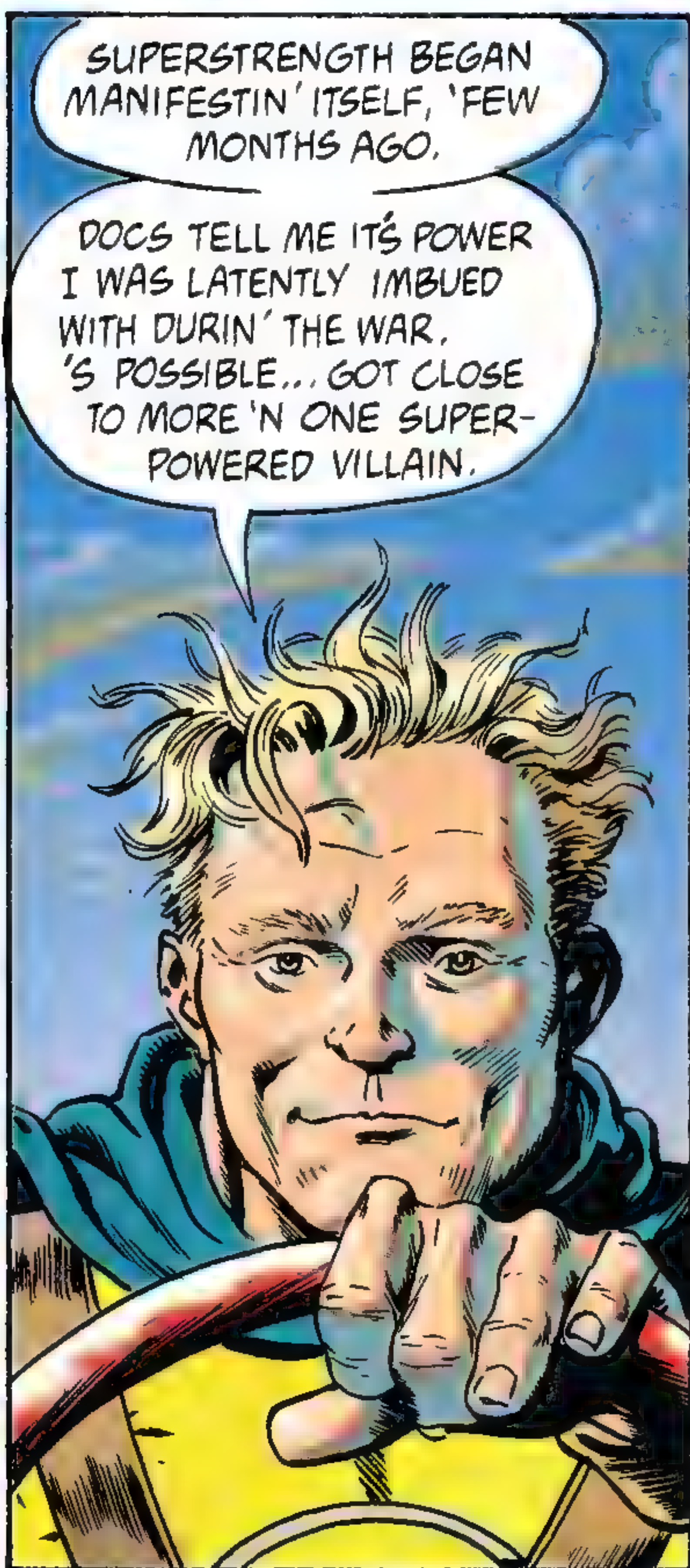
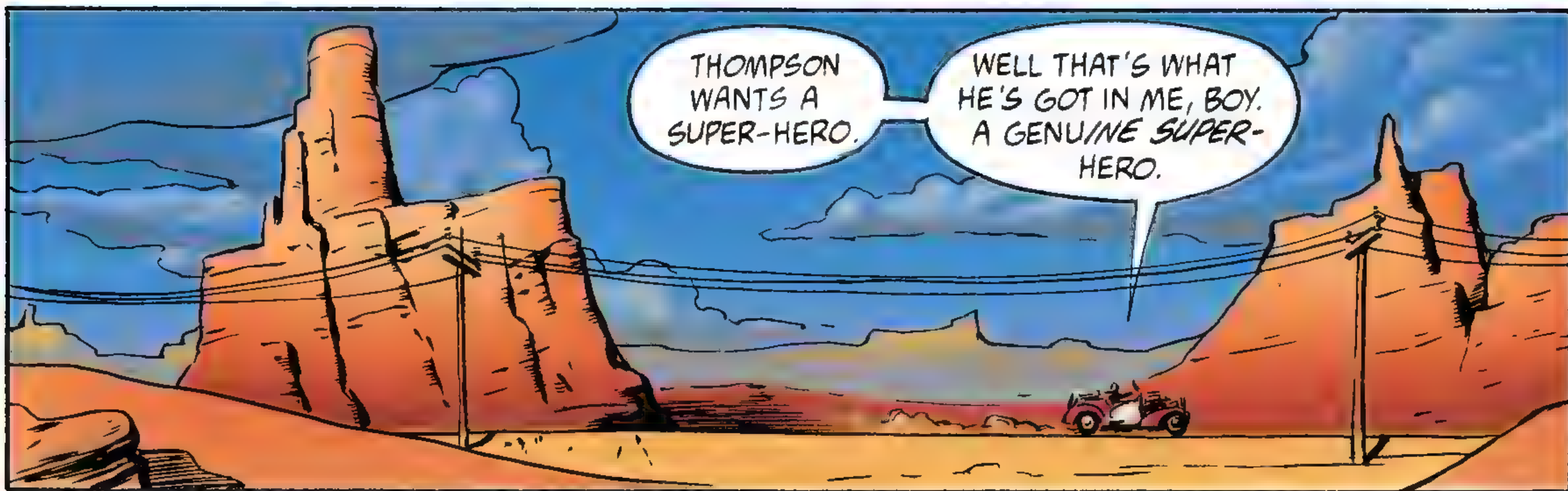
Then the speech shifted, moving into darker aspects of American life. Thompson's voice became ardent and fiery as he allied himself with the anti-communist views of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Interestingly, Thompson's views were made very specific. He denounced Russia and the Soviet people, rather than taking the usual hard line against a more nebulous and difficult to define "red menace."

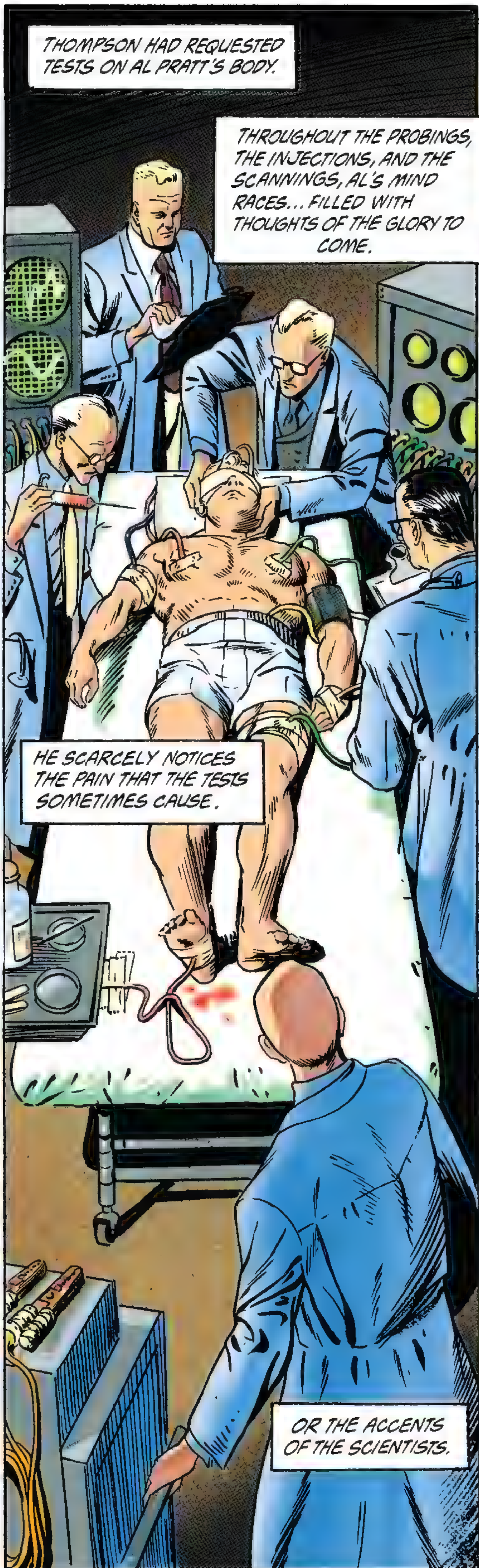
For months now, Thompson has been vocal in demanding the scientific creation of "a super-hero for the new age." This time was no exception, but now he added that the superbeing should be created with the specific aim of "physically defending these shores from the growing threat the Soviet nation now poses."

Whether Thompson's more defined outlook will aid in getting government backing for development of this "super-man" is still in question. But judging from the quite vocal support his speech received from government officials that were present, an affirmative answer is near.

In turn, it can also be assumed that Thompson's Senate appointment is equally assured.

Though there has been no formal declaration as yet, sources close to the Governor's office say that Thompson's name is frequently mentioned. These sources also



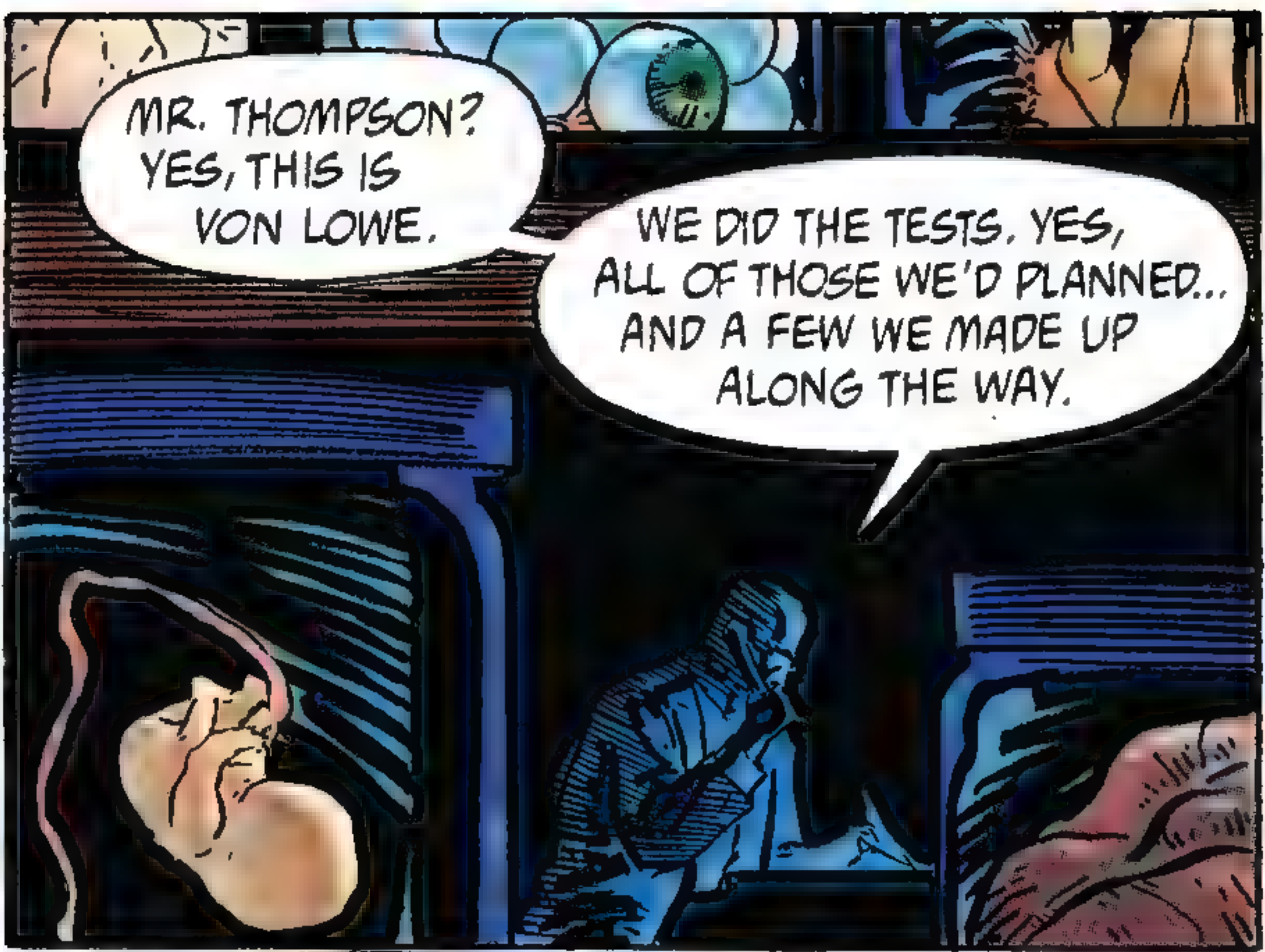


THOMPSON HAD REQUESTED TESTS ON AL PRATT'S BODY.

THROUGHOUT THE PROBINGS, THE INJECTIONS, AND THE SCANNINGS, AL'S MIND RACES... FILLED WITH THOUGHTS OF THE GLORY TO COME.

HE SCARCELY NOTICES THE PAIN THAT THE TESTS SOMETIMES CAUSE.

OR THE ACCENTS OF THE SCIENTISTS.



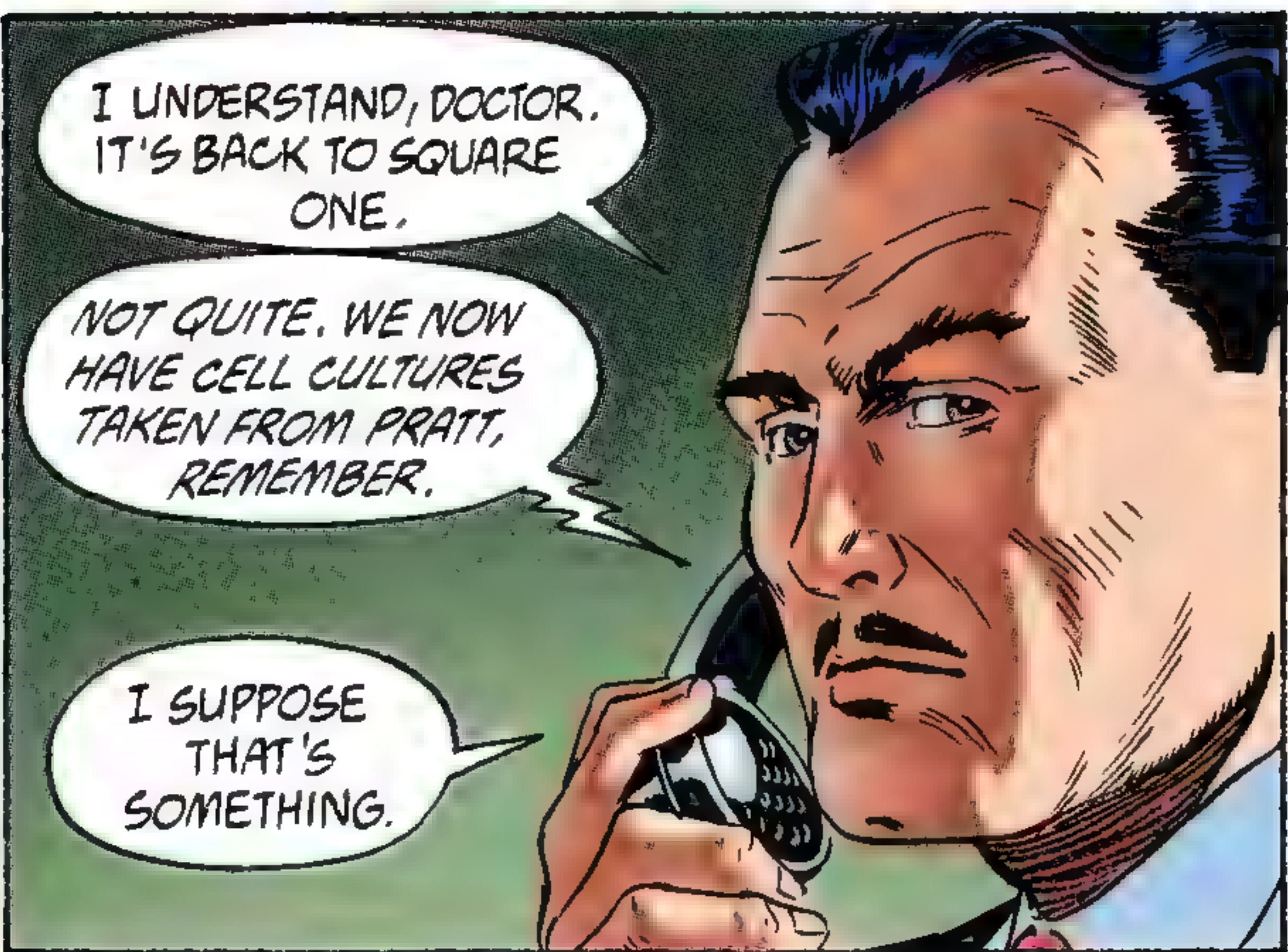
MR. THOMPSON?
YES, THIS IS VON LOWE.

WE DID THE TESTS. YES, ALL OF THOSE WE'D PLANNED... AND A FEW WE MADE UP ALONG THE WAY.



I'M SORRY, WE CAN'T USE PRATT. HIS BODY'S ALREADY ATOMICALLY POWERED.

YES, BEING THE ACTUAL TEST SUBJECT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION... I'VE ALREADY EXPLAINED WHY.



I UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR. IT'S BACK TO SQUARE ONE.

NOT QUITE. WE NOW HAVE CELL CULTURES TAKEN FROM PRATT, REMEMBER.

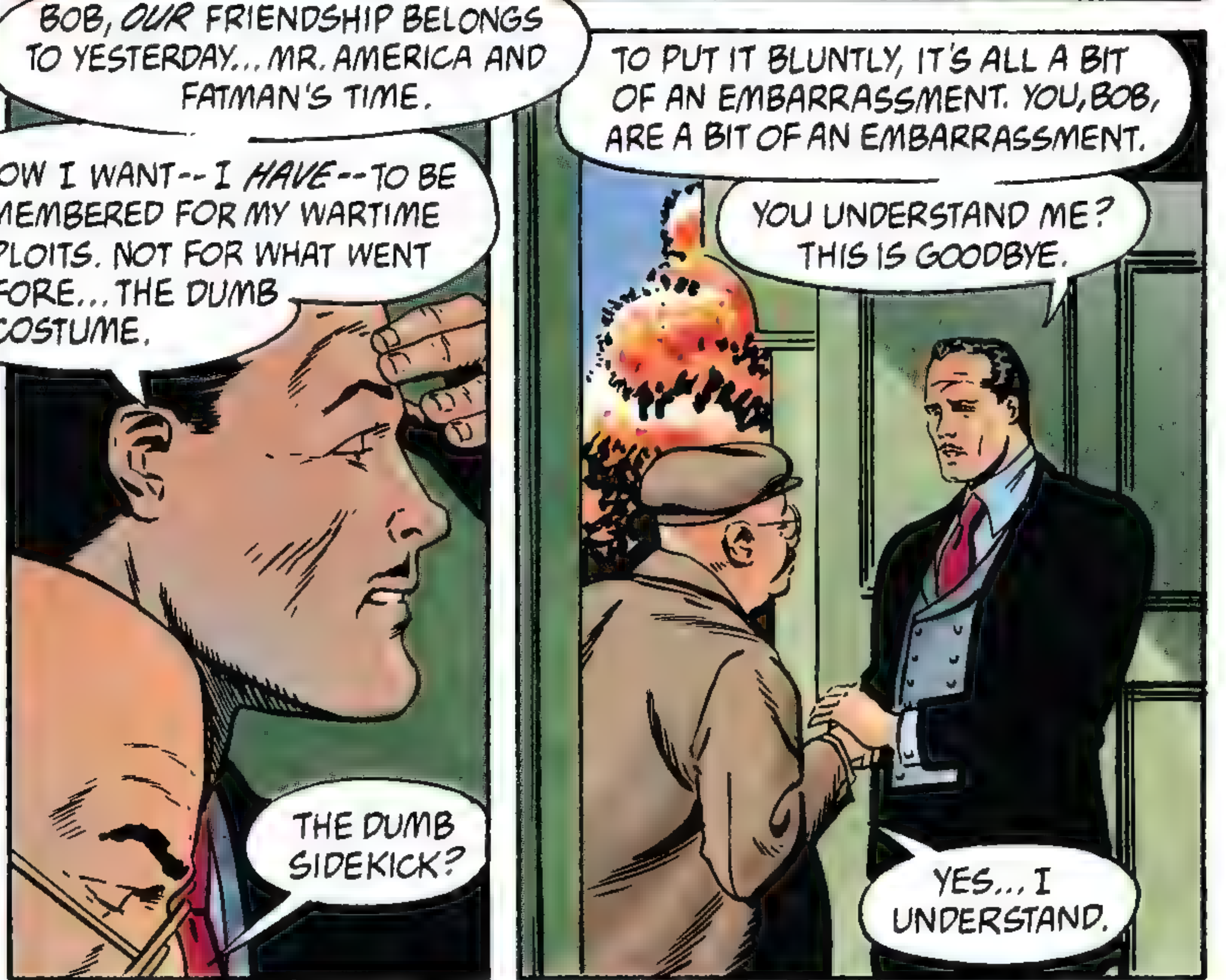
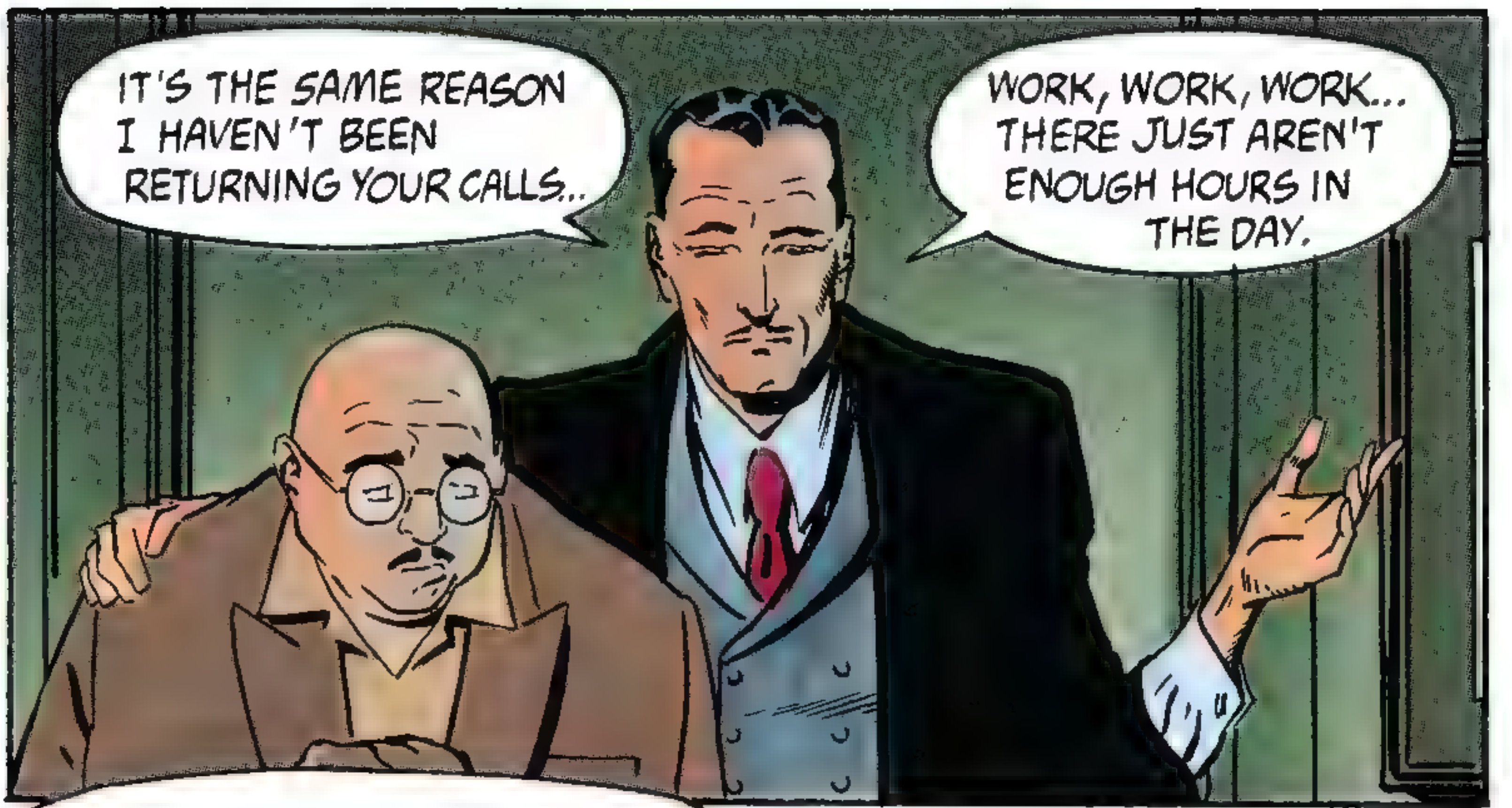
I SUPPOSE THAT'S SOMETHING.



OH, BY THE WAY, ABOUT YOUR APPOINTMENT...

...CONGRATULATIONS, SENATOR.

I'VE BEEN FORTUNATE, THANK YOU. WE'LL TALK AGAIN, DOCTOR. SOON.



It seems--the work continues.

Work developing--re-developing--the miracle. Again. Yet again.

TYLER CHEMICALS

DELIVERIES IN REAR

The Miracle Pill.

Tyler Chemicals--my company's like a baby that refuses to grow--always needing my watchful eye. I should take what happened as an omen--to hang up the cape, Rex. Move on.

After what happened.

4:07 when I took the pill--and for an instant I felt the familiar pain that's almost pleasure. I was knight for an hour.

I felt the rush--of strength, speed and senses. My heart became a snare drum on a roll, and I raced to fight--

The Icicle

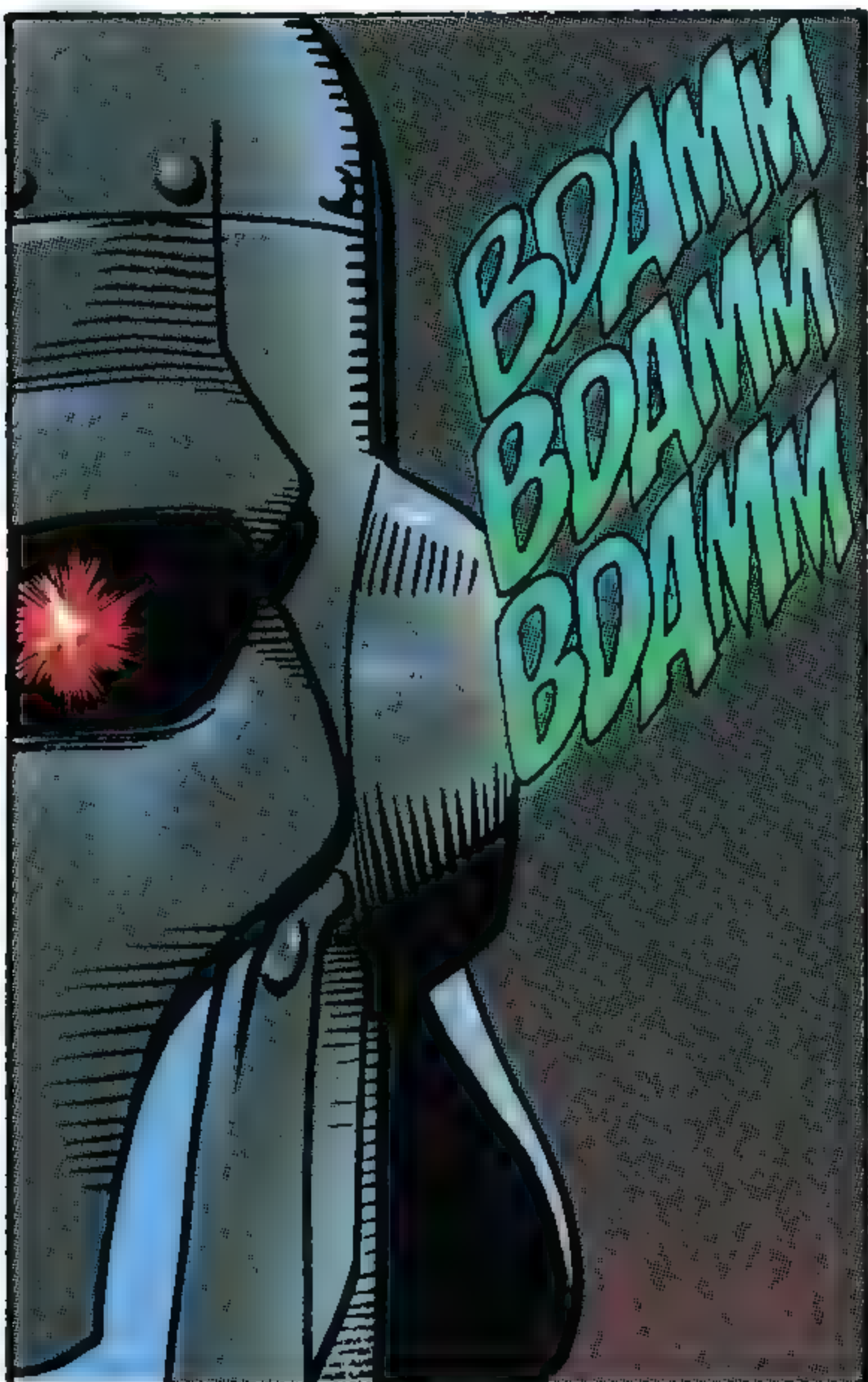
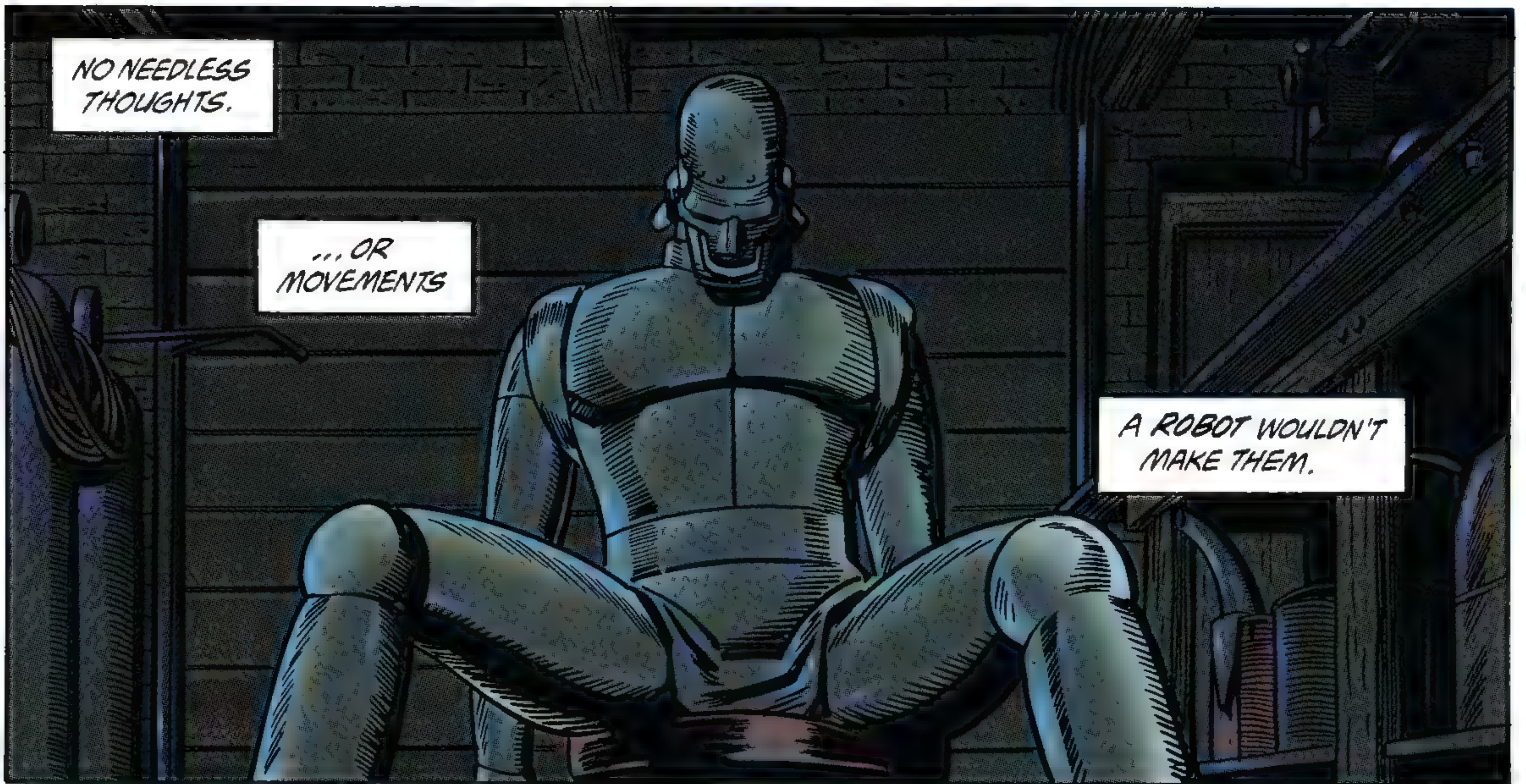
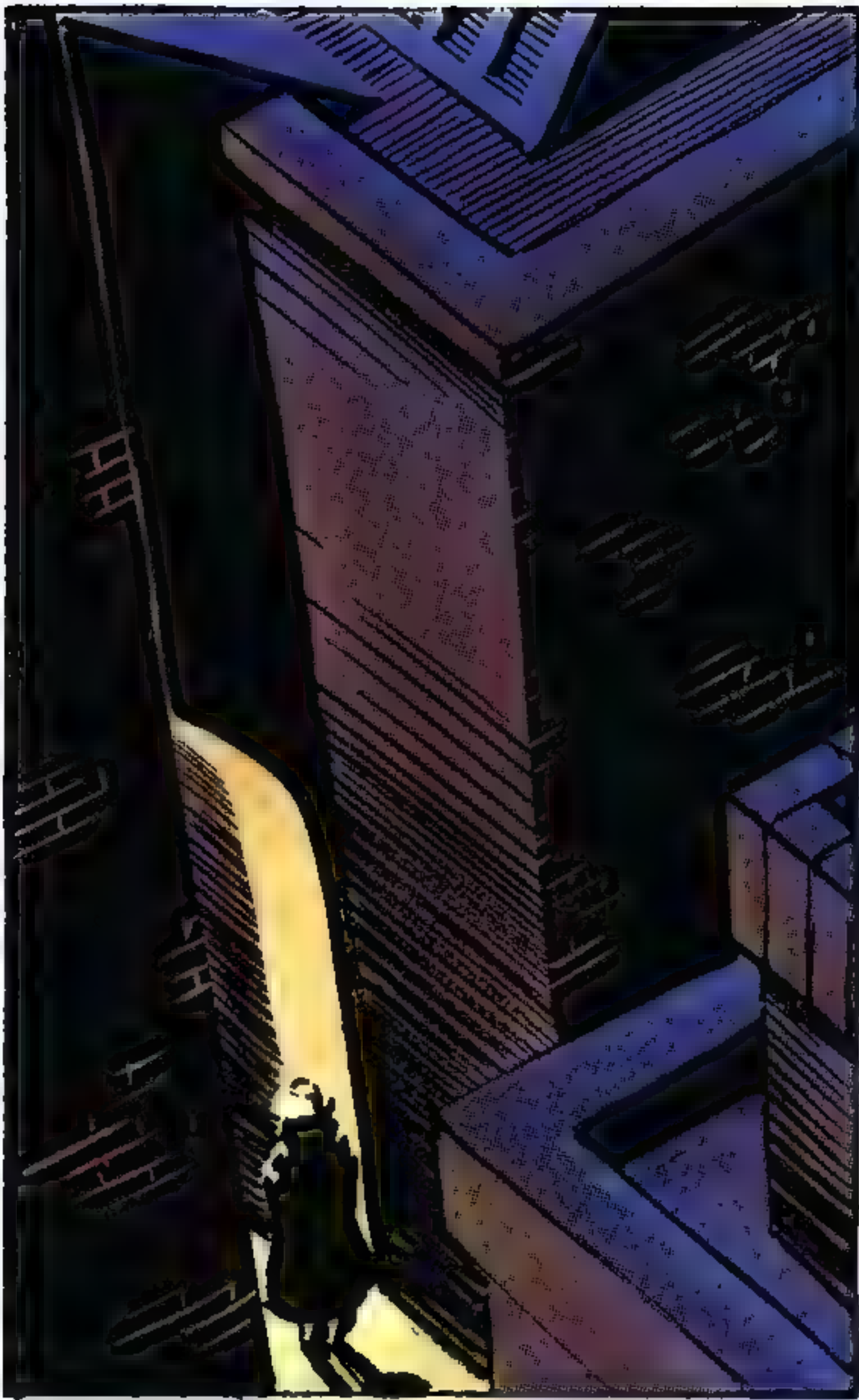
Tomorrow it might be the Gambler, The Mist, or some other costumed fool wanting to see bars at his windows for the umpteenth time.

Nowadays they seem to lose out of habit. I beat the Icicle--as usual--delivering the knock-out punch just before I felt my powers ebb.

So what happened? what terrible thing happened today?

As the power left me, I looked at my timepiece. It was 4:31.

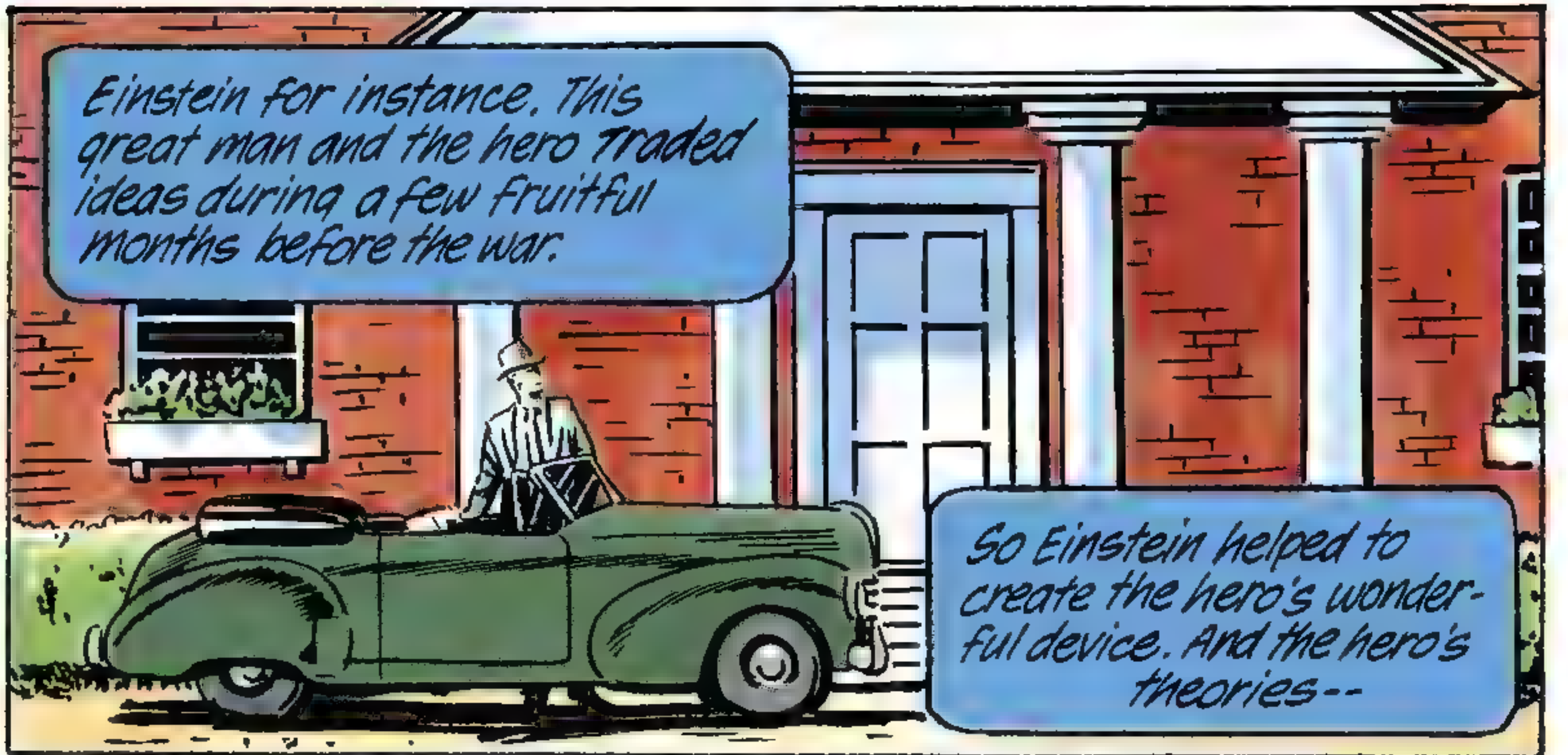
Hourman's power--had only lasted 24 minutes.





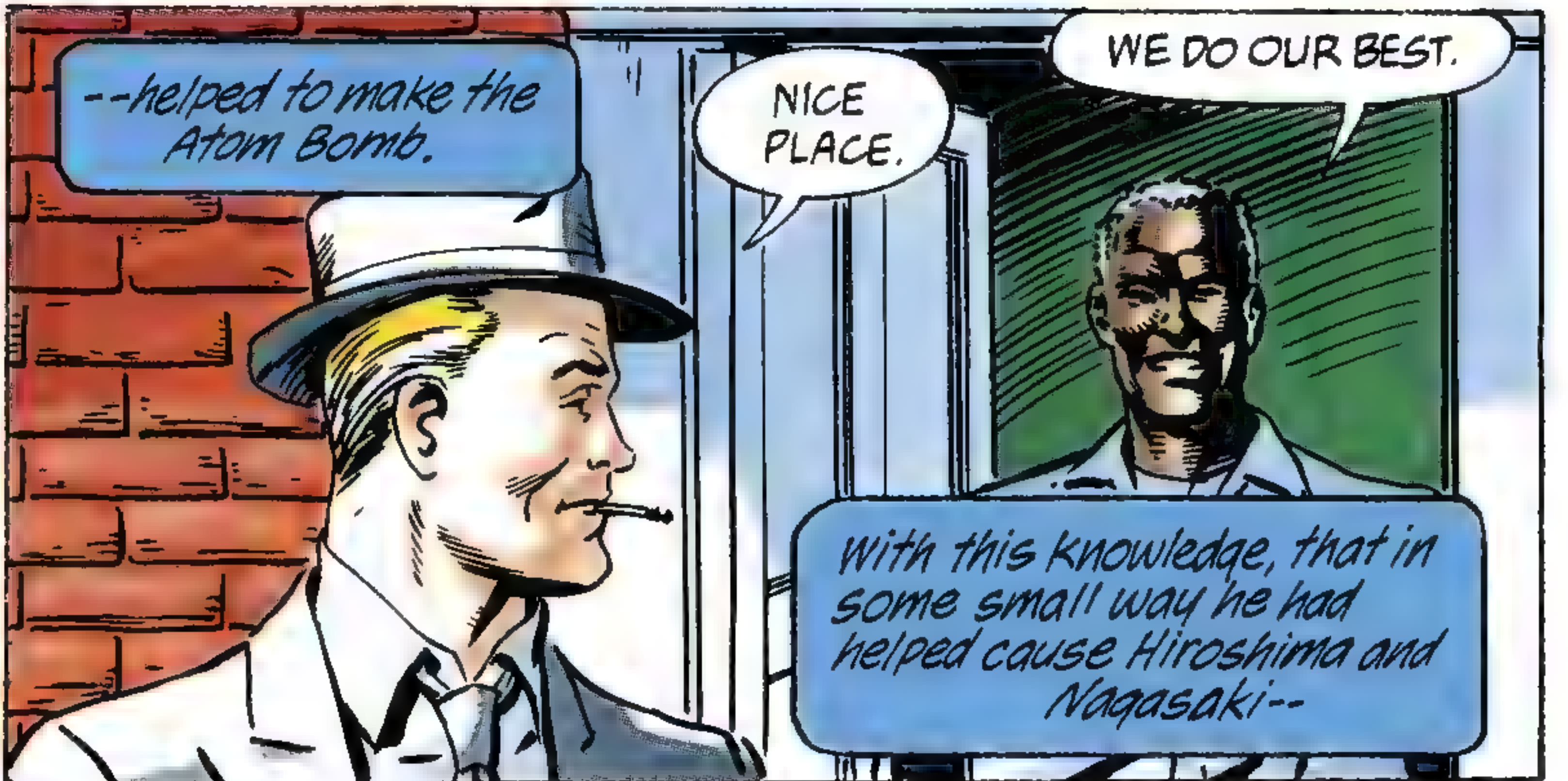
I'm visiting a hero.

The hero used a wonderful device to right wrongs. A device he invented using his own scientific theories -- and those of other great minds.



Einstein for instance. This great man and the hero traded ideas during a few fruitful months before the war.

So Einstein helped to create the hero's wonderful device. And the hero's theories--

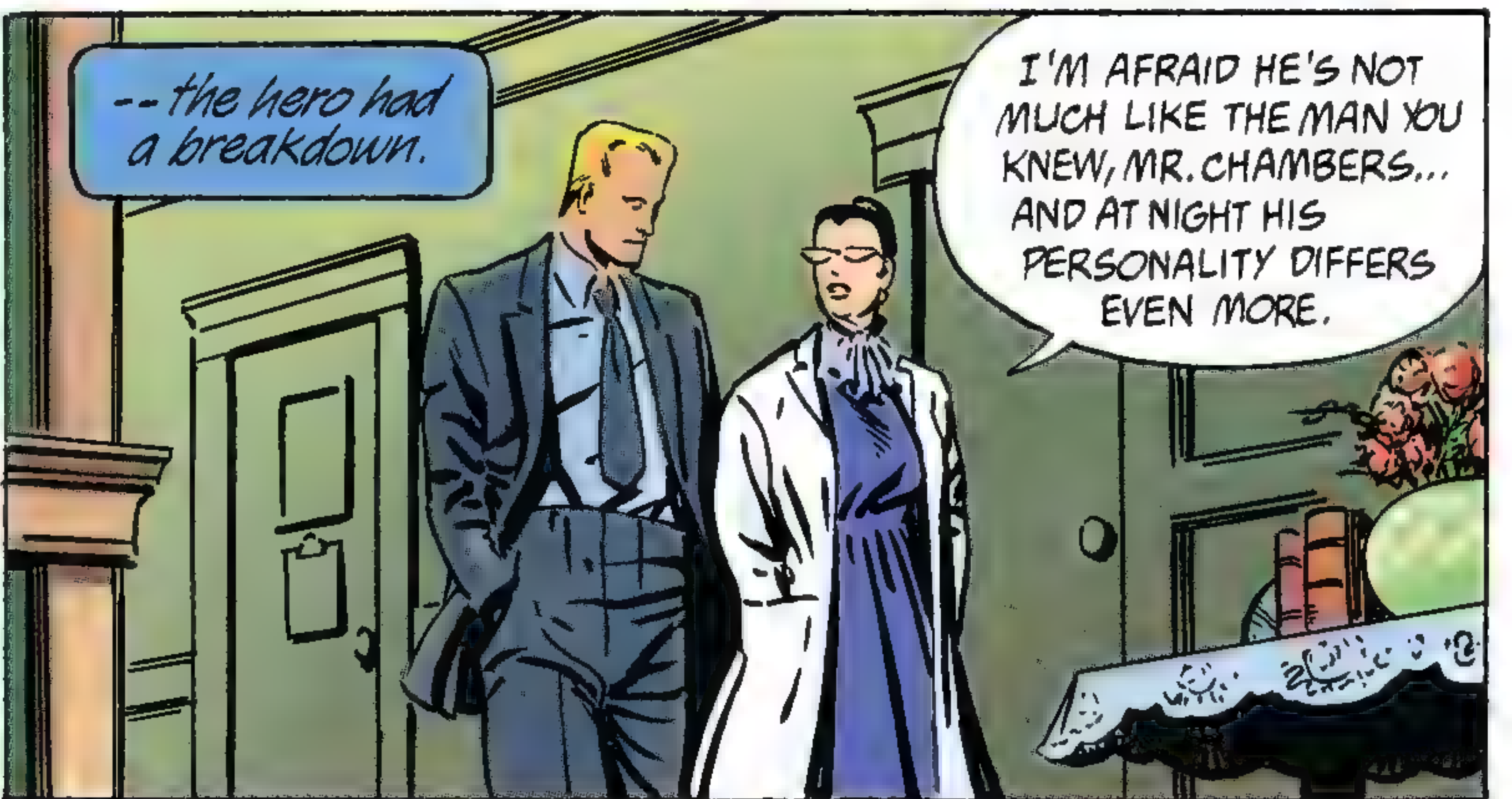


--helped to make the Atom Bomb.

NICE PLACE.

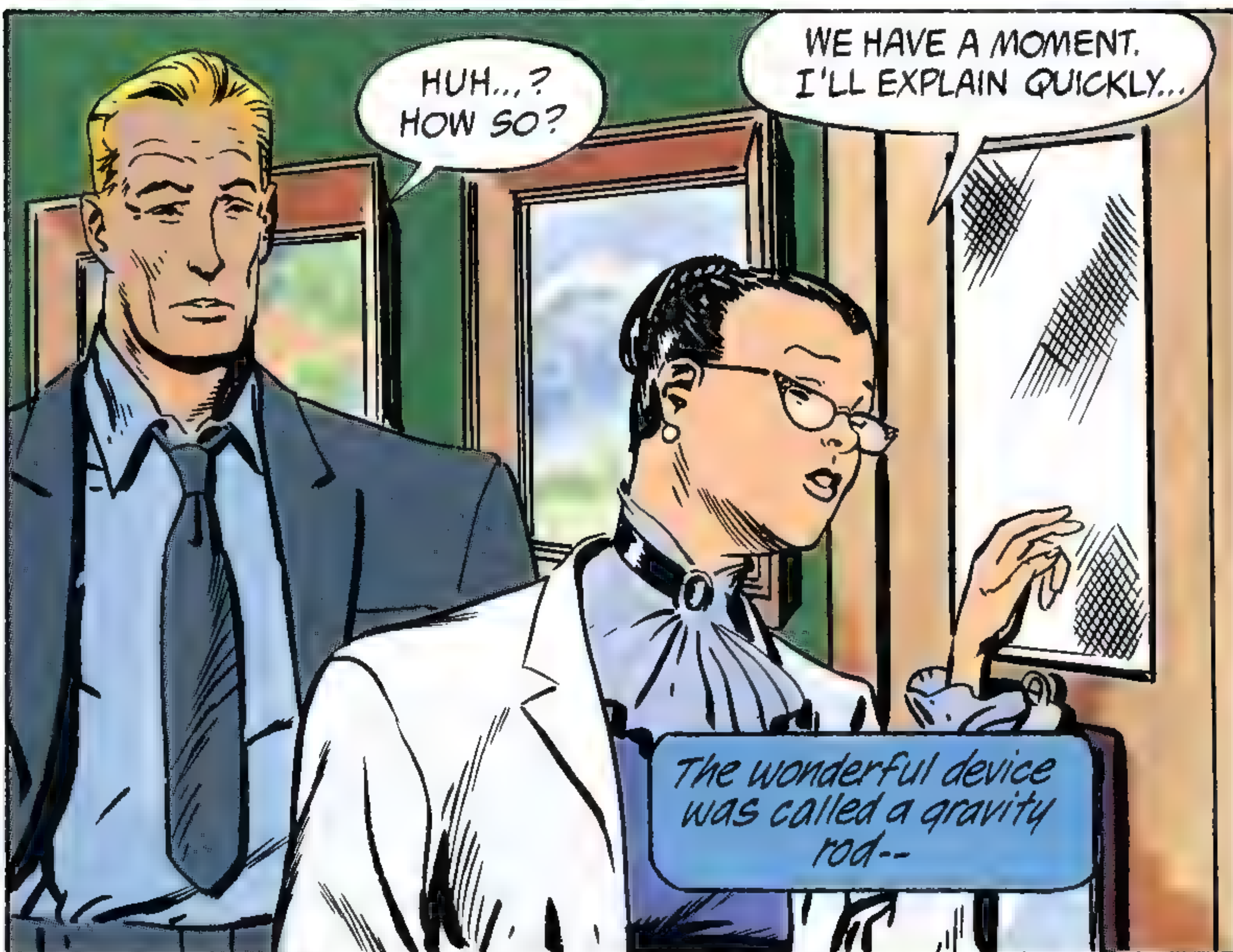
WE DO OUR BEST.

With this knowledge, that in some small way he had helped cause Hiroshima and Nagasaki--



--the hero had a breakdown.

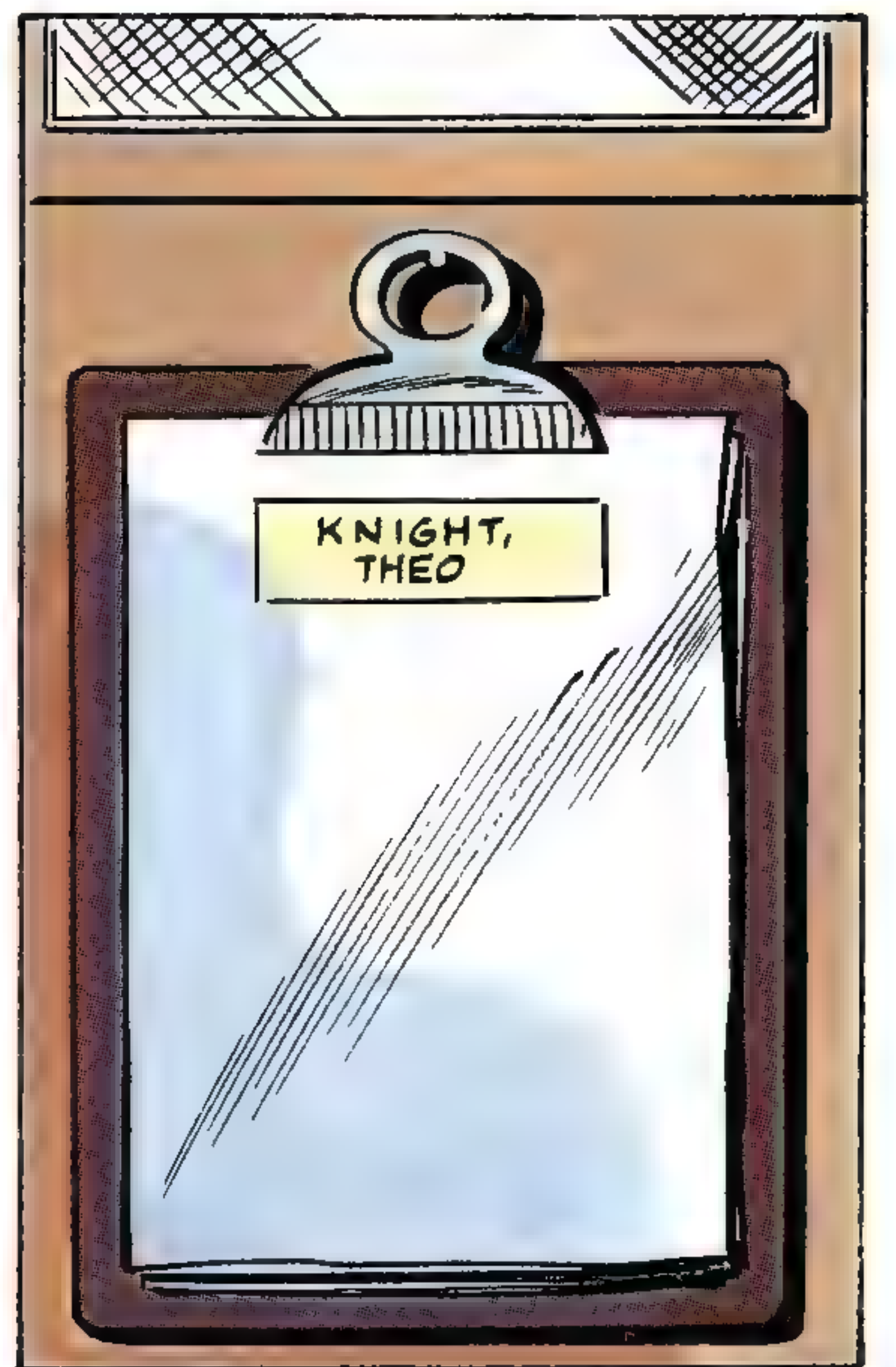
I'M AFRAID HE'S NOT MUCH LIKE THE MAN YOU KNEW, MR. CHAMBERS... AND AT NIGHT HIS PERSONALITY DIFFERS EVEN MORE.



HUH...? HOW SO?

WE HAVE A MOMENT. I'LL EXPLAIN QUICKLY...

The wonderful device was called a gravity rod--





--The hero's name was Starman.

TED...TED, NOTHING GOOD CAN COME FROM THIS.

GUILT... I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU MIGHT FEEL IT. BUT THERE'S A POINT WHERE YOU HAVE TO SAY "ENOUGH."

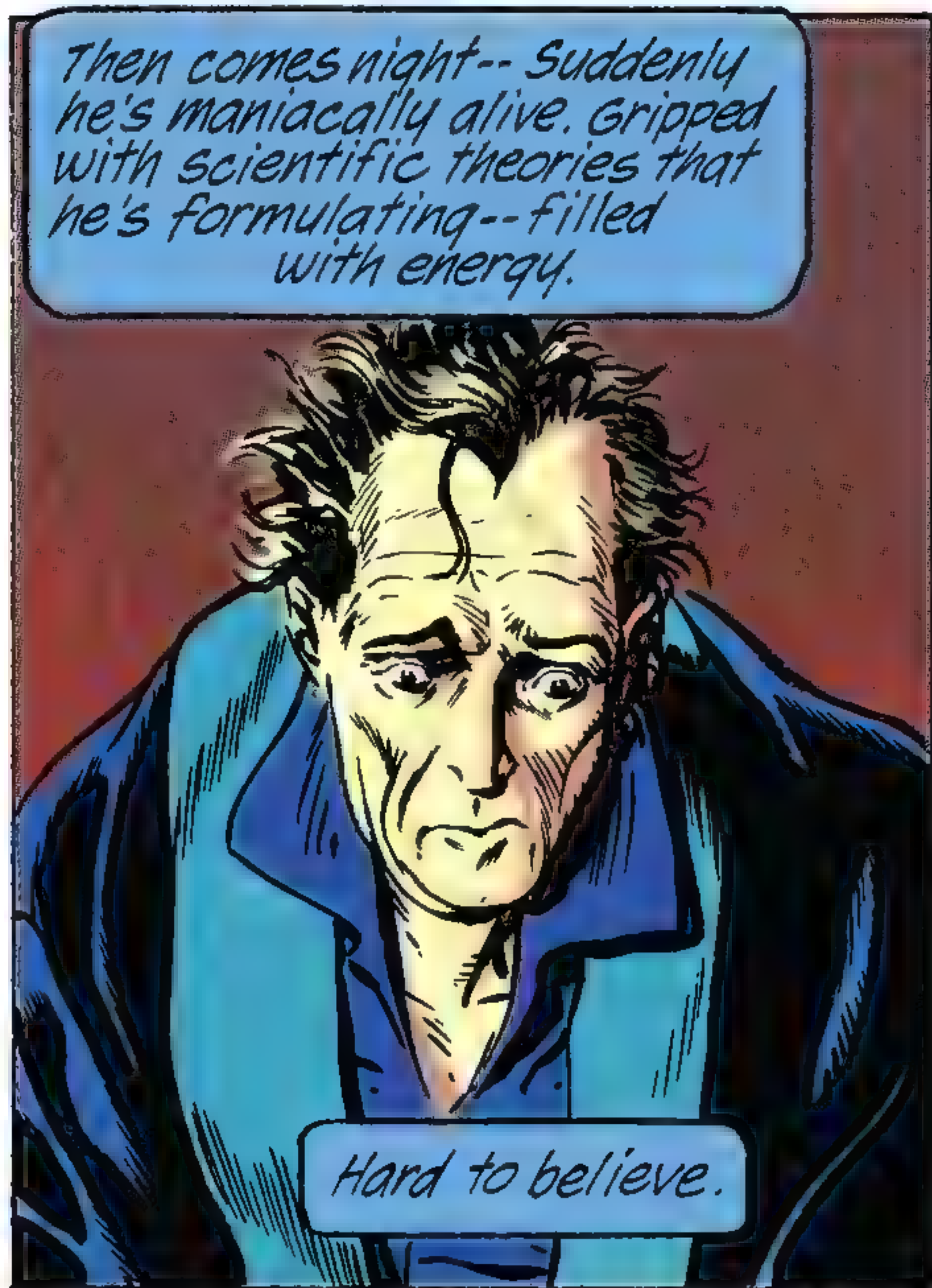
LOOK AT YOU. IT'S EATING YOU UP, IT'S KILLING YOU.

I KNOW... I KNOW YOU'RE RIGHT.



BUT PART OF ME SAYS THAT THE PAIN I FEEL IS NO MORE THAN I DESERVE.

The doctor told me to expect this--the daytime Ted Knight--sad, tired, spent--shuffling around in his pajamas.



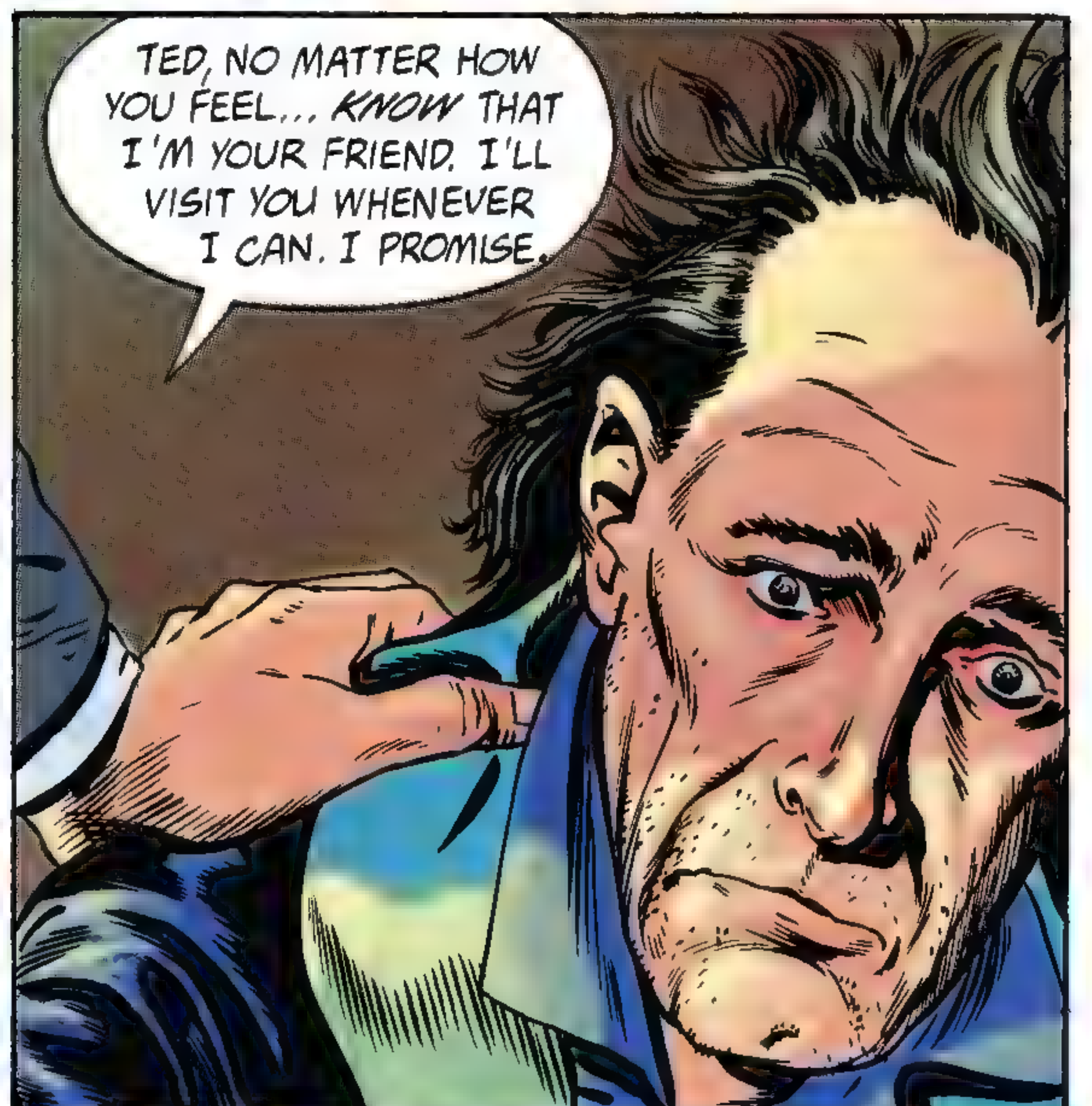
Then comes night-- Suddenly he's maniacally alive. Gripped with scientific theories that he's formulating--filled with energy.

Hard to believe.



OKAY IF I SMOKE?

OF COURSE. IN FACT, I'LL JOIN YOU IF I MAY.



the bowery mission looks bad,
smells worse, but at least you've
got a bed. not like other nights--
sleeping in alleys, doorways,
bushes in the parks.

it doesn't matter. wherever
you sleep--

-- the dream
remains the
same.

a dream of men
with accountants'
faces and surgeons'
scalpels.

you were a hunter-- big
game-- you know blood.
this sight shouldn't
scare you, sicken you.
but it does.

force yourself to look-- look
over their shoulders. fight
the fear-- the nausea--

-- and see the
eagle.

feathers, white
and brown-- now
stained crimson.



then the dream
shifts, as dreams do.

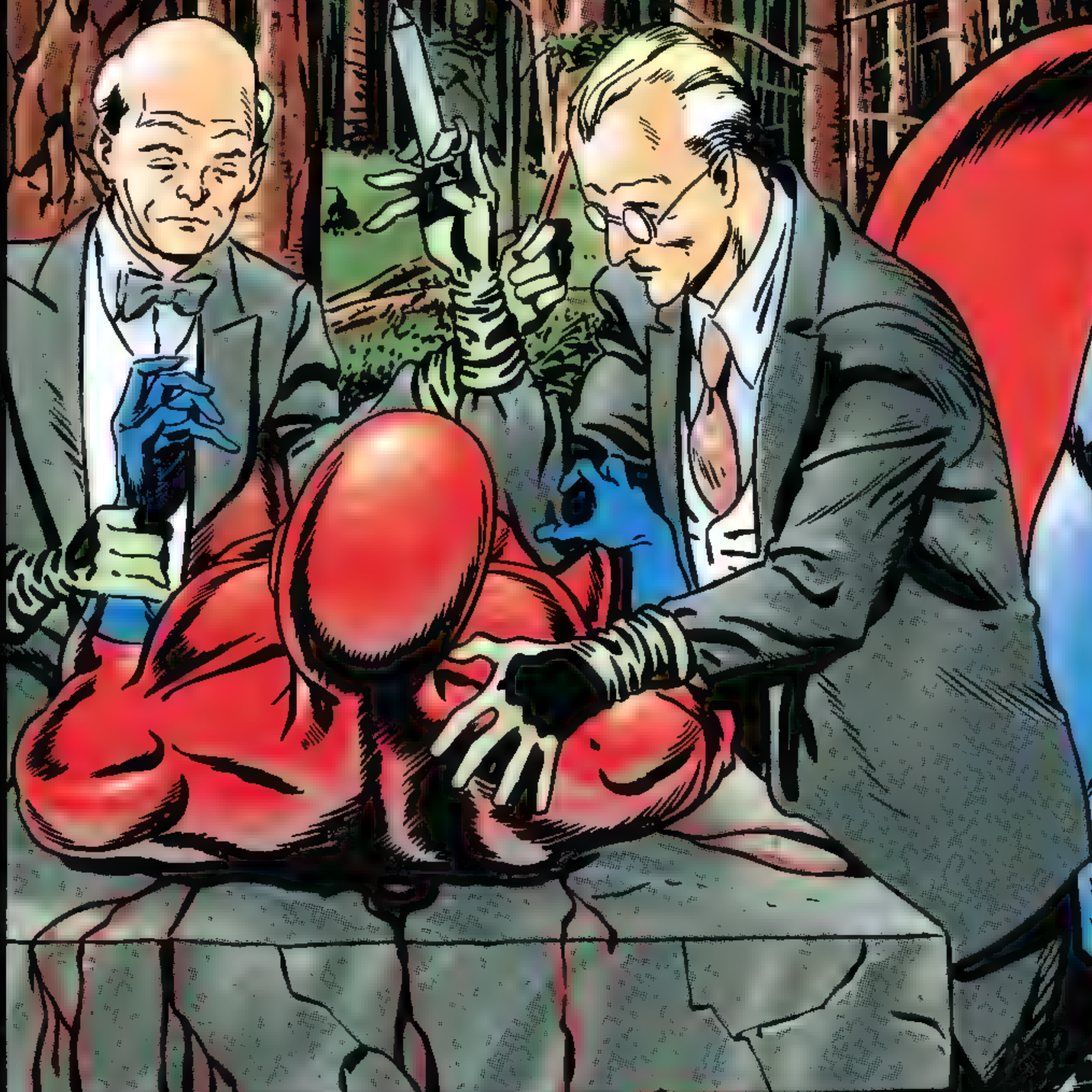


and you,
paul kirk--

--are no longer looking
over the surgeons'
shoulders.



the
dream
remains
the
same.



you awaken,
breathless, and
thankful you're
able to.

you know you need help--
help to remember-- help to
confront what you've
managed to forget--

--if only you
trusted someone--
anyone--enough
to ask.



the room smells like
a hundred emptying
bladders.

but it's quiet--at least it's that--like
nights on the Kenyan plains, when
the whole world seems to be at peace.

when you were
a hunter.

with hunters'
instincts so acute...

...that any strange
sound would alert
them.

CLICK

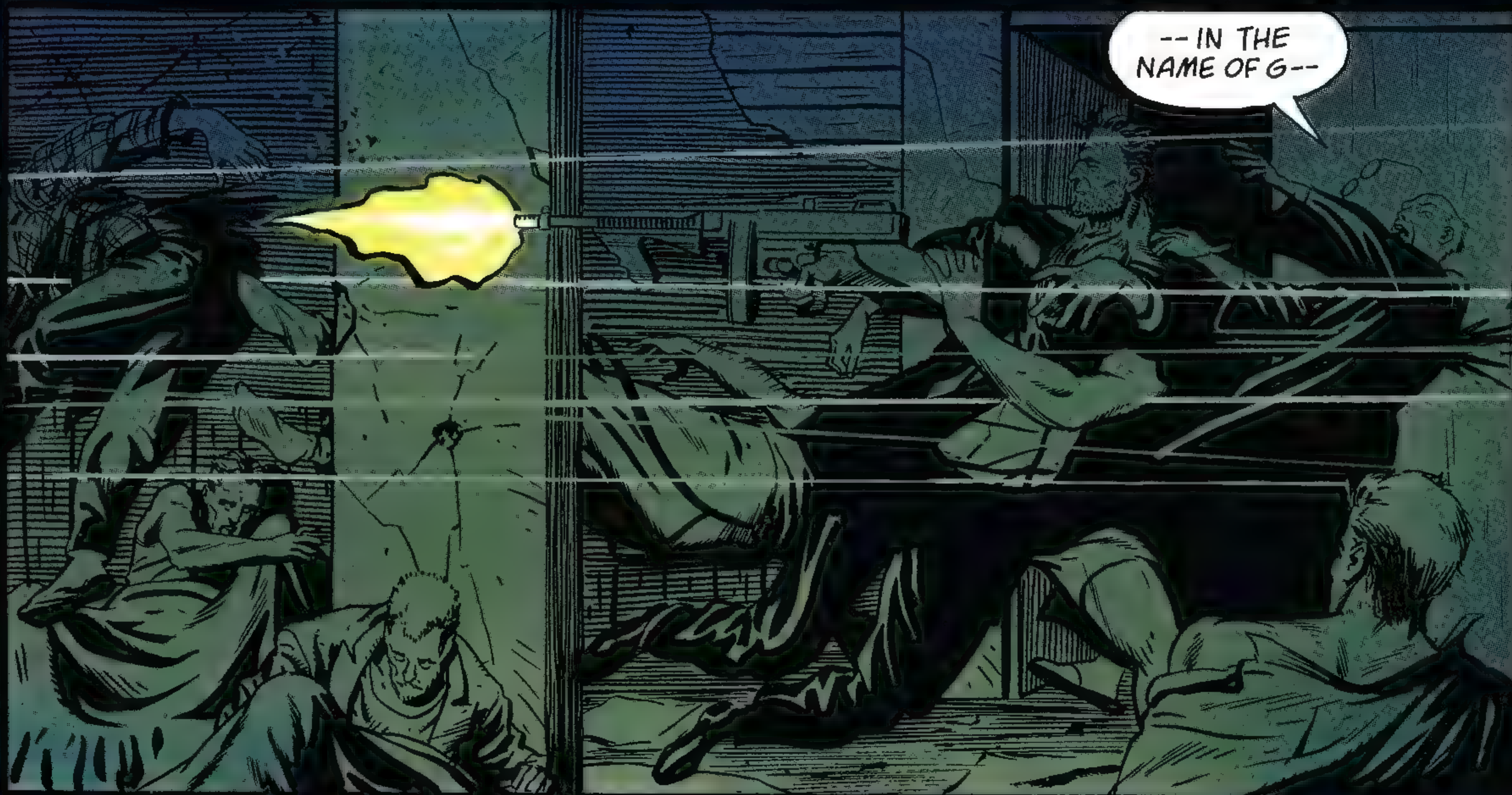
WHICH ONE'S
KIRK?

WHO CARES...

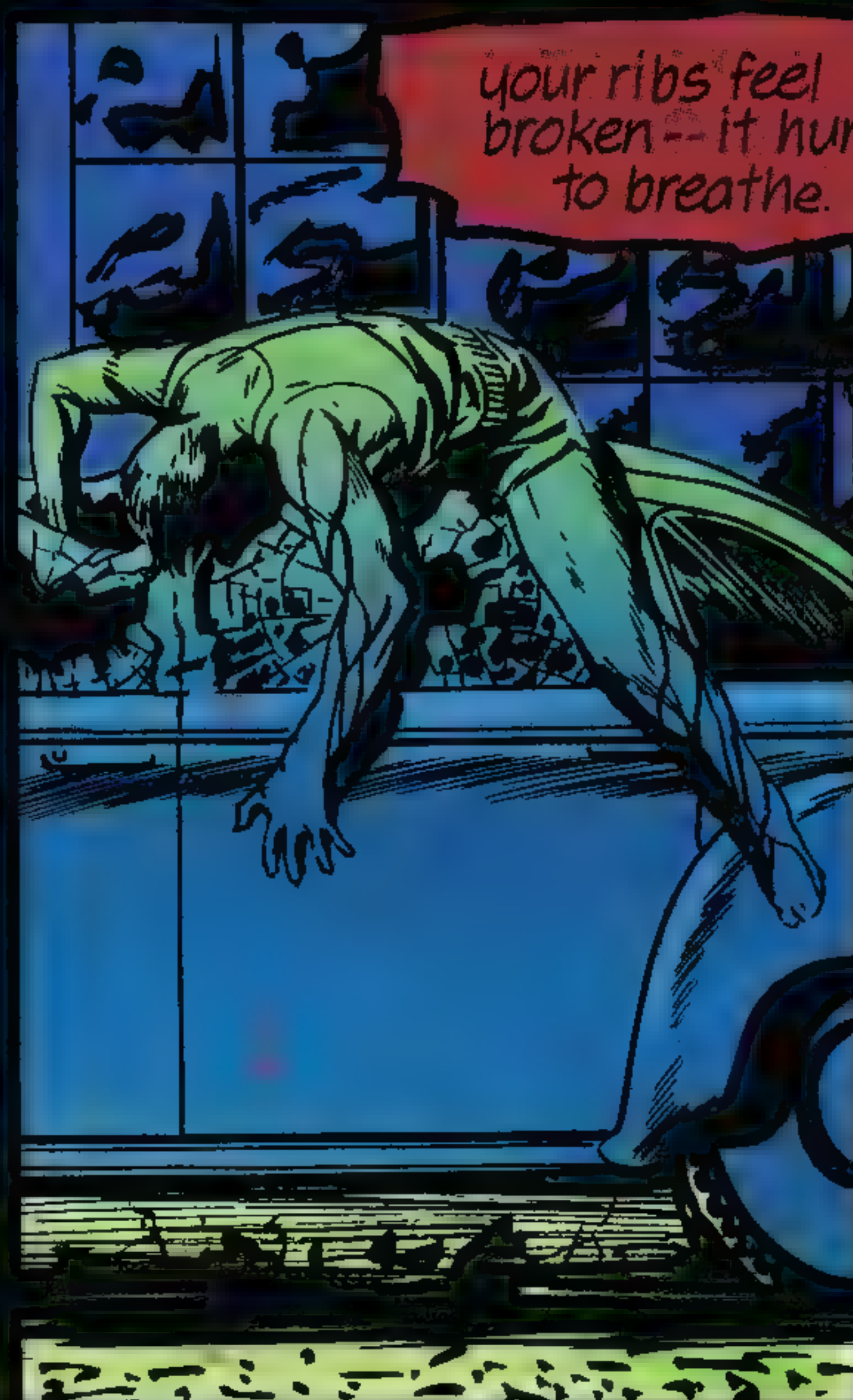
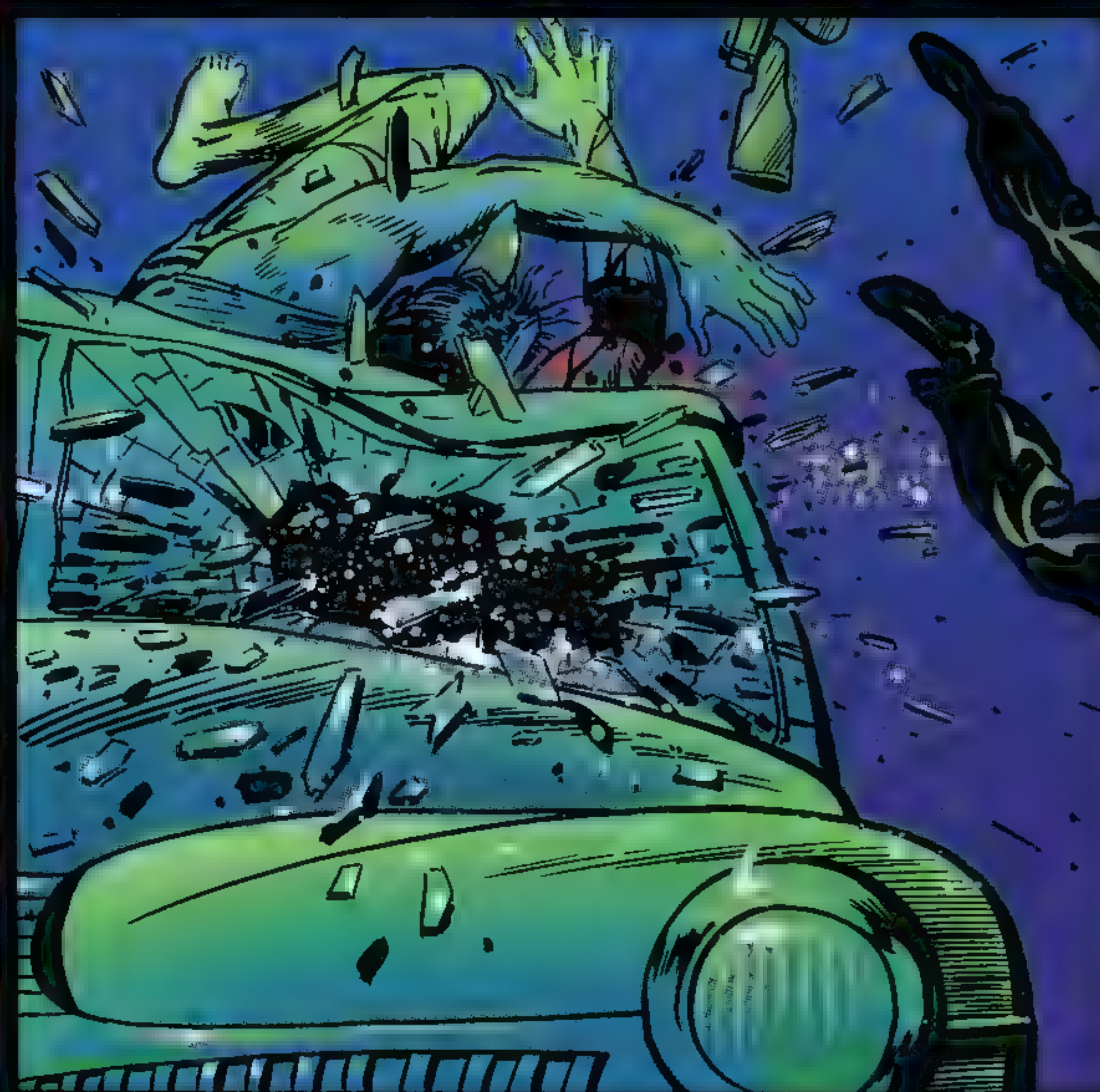
I IN HERE...

WHA--?





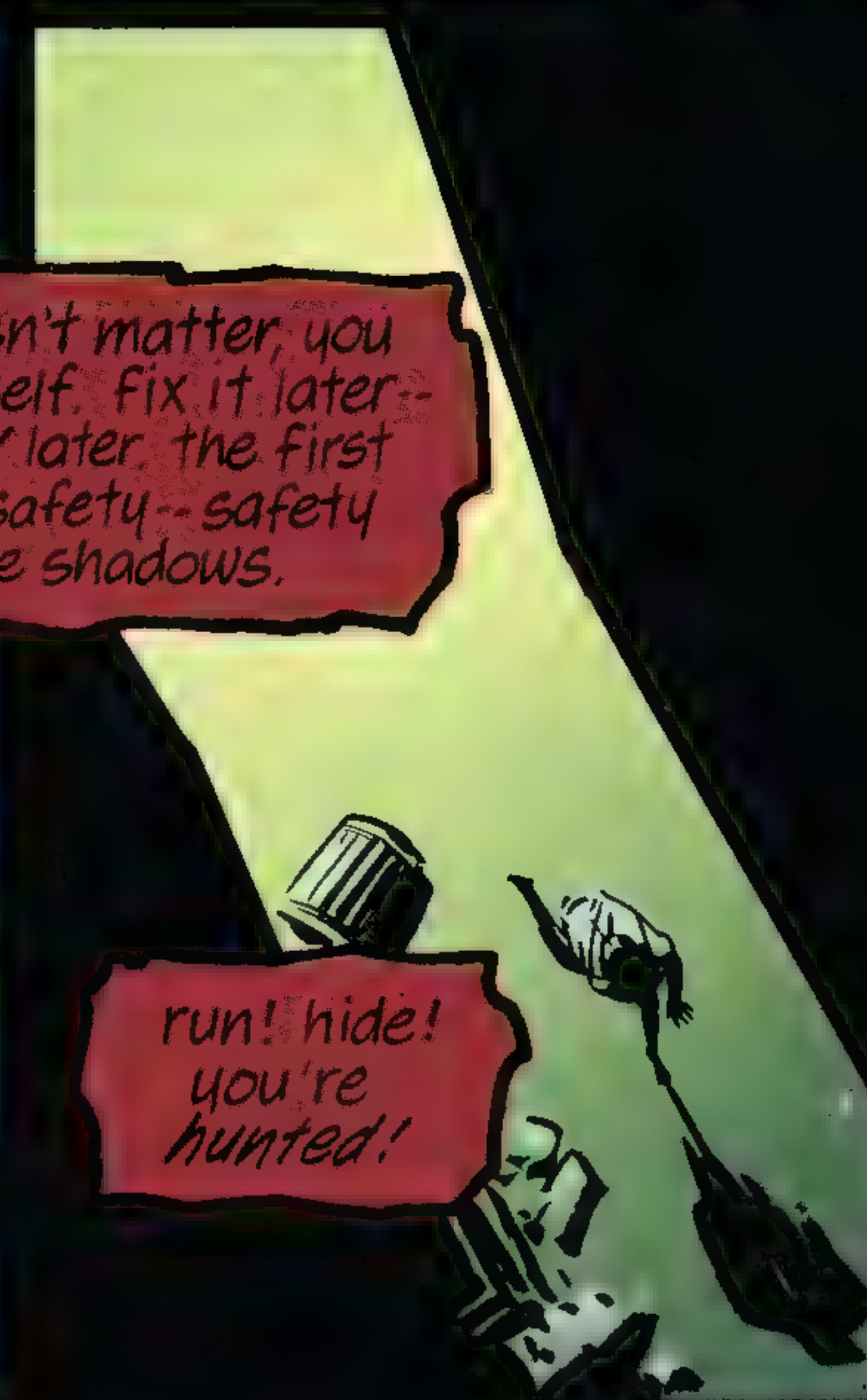
-- IN THE
NAME OF G--



your ribs feel
broken-- it hurts
to breathe.



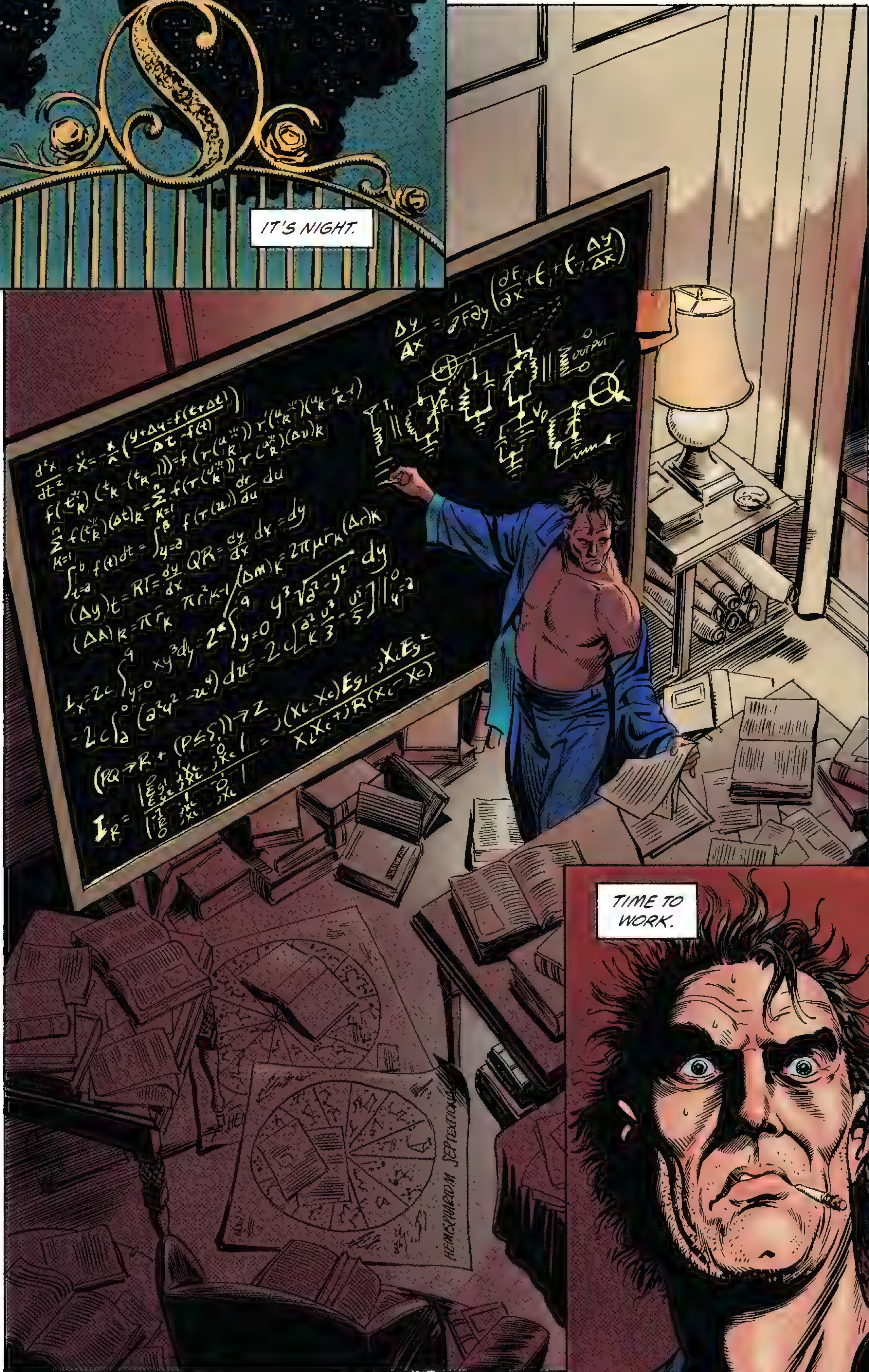
that doesn't matter, you
tell yourself. fix it later--
fix it *a//* later. the first
thing is safety-- safety
of the shadows.



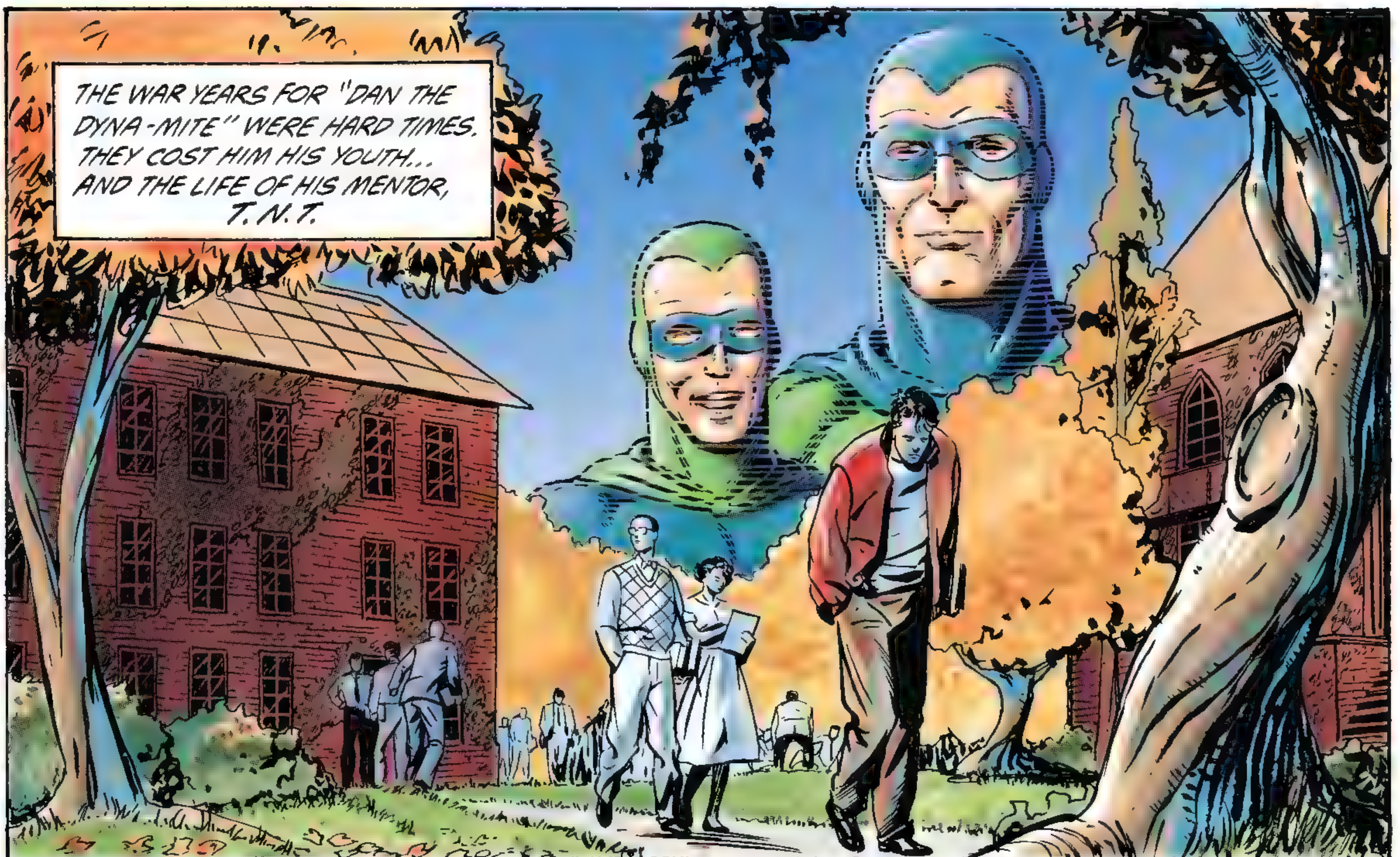
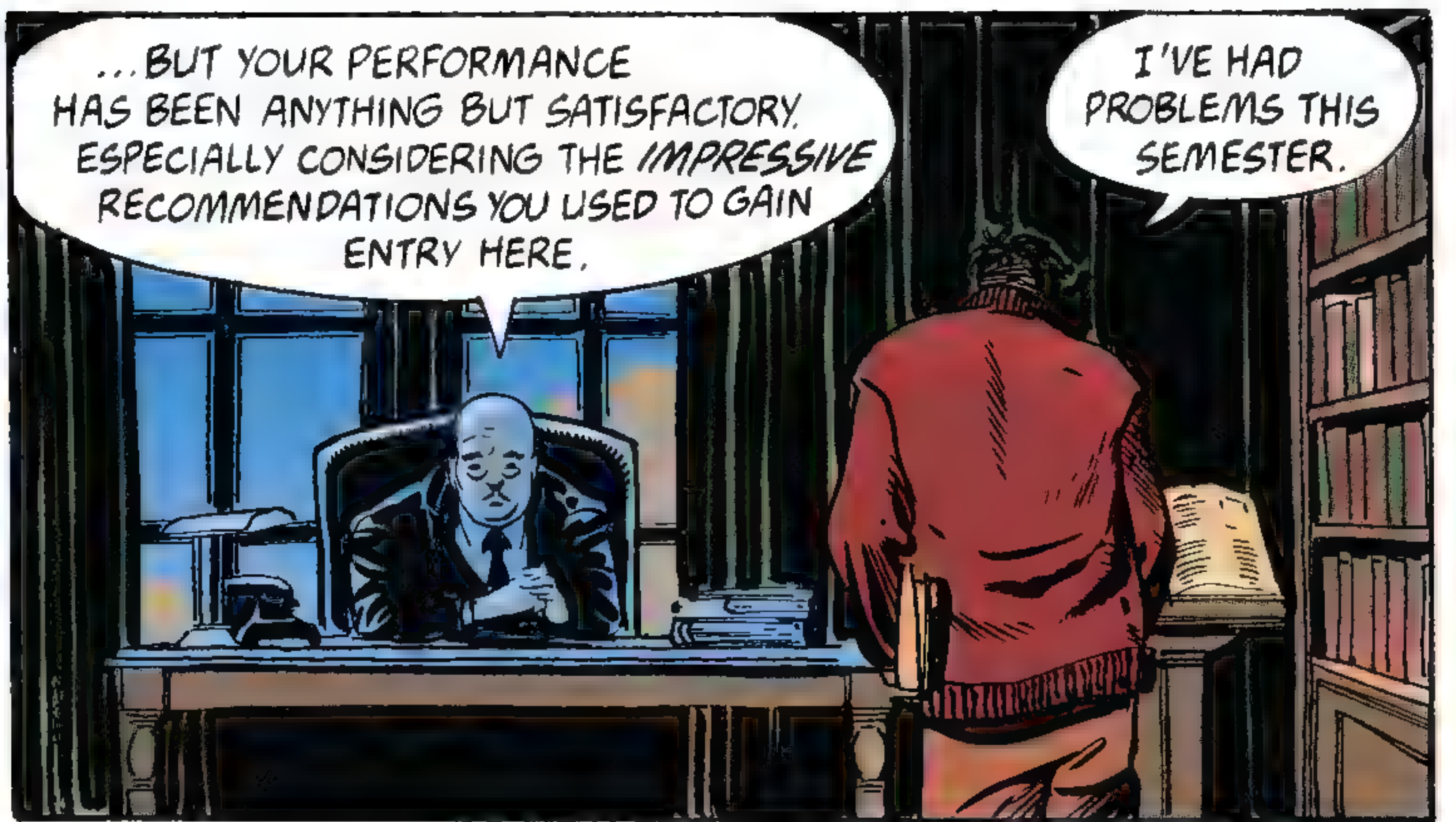
run! hide!
you're
hunted!

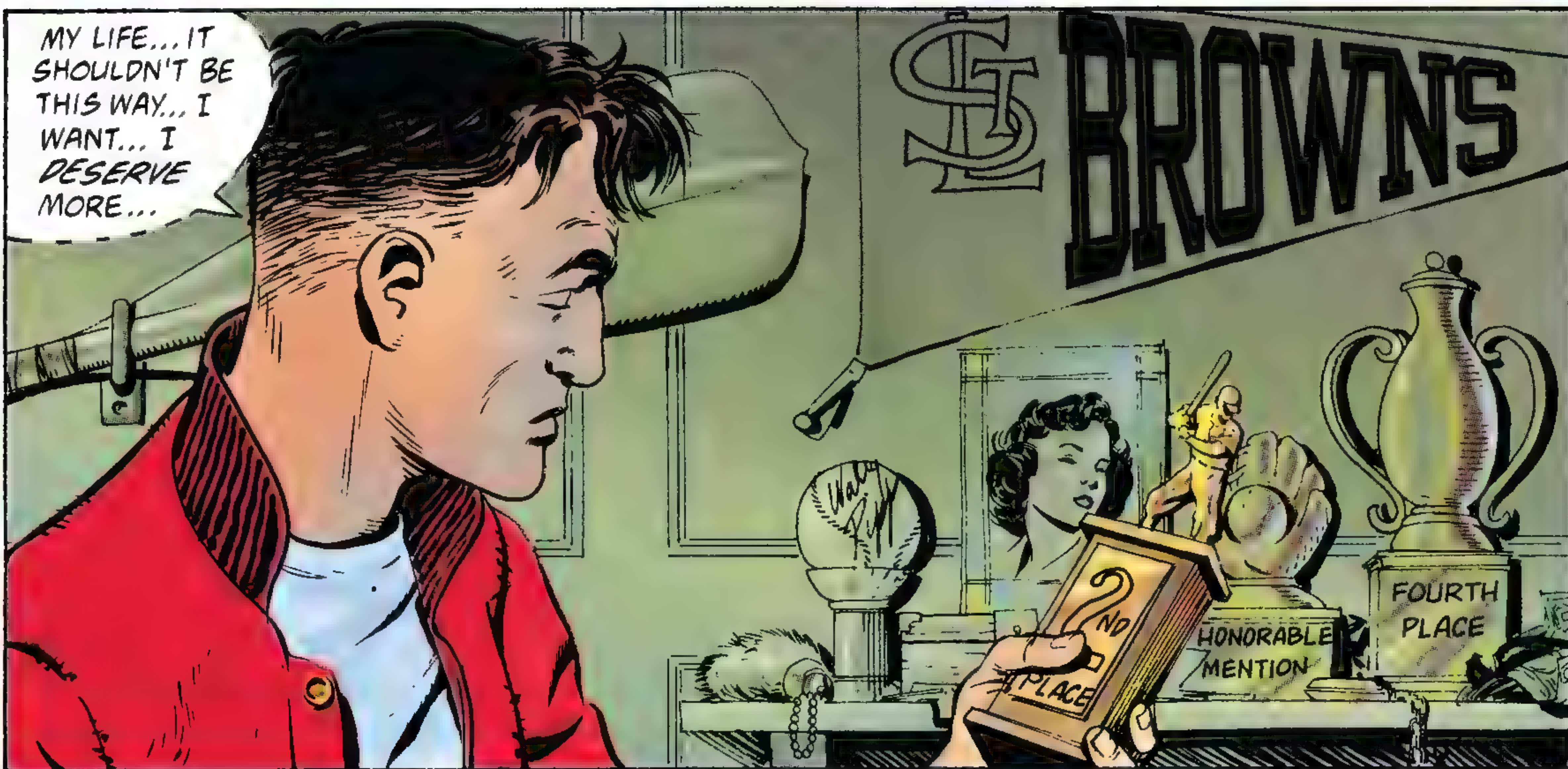


IT'S NIGHT.



TIME TO
WORK.









"We

had the

bomb."



I've no time for this.

No time.

"Masks" has been finished for months. I should close my mind to the nonsense of super-heroes. Forget.

I should--

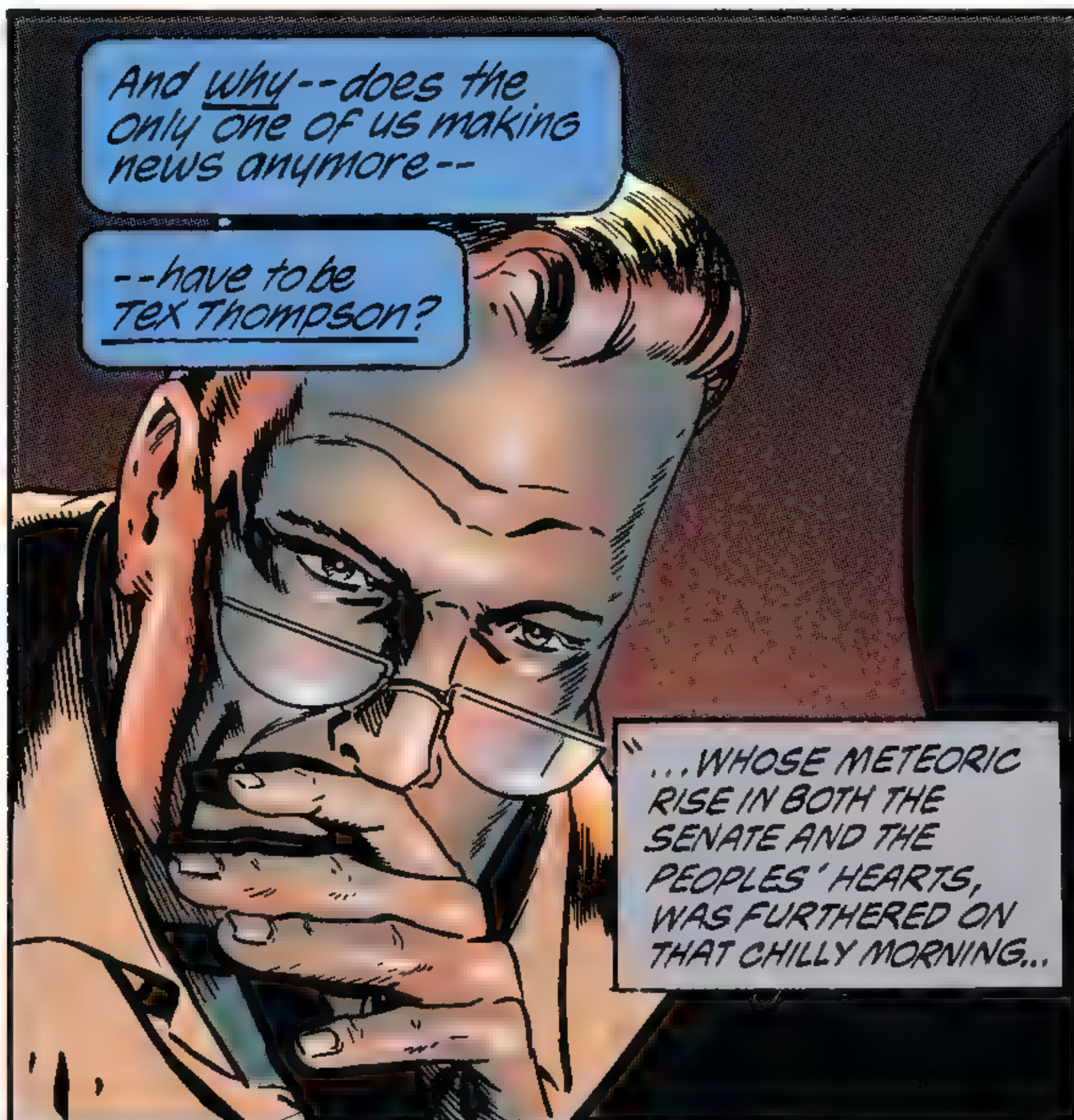
Too much to do-- Research for the baseball documentary-- Sound looping for the one on psychiatric hospitals.

And my teeth are due for a check-up.



So why? Why am I constantly going back, to review-- add to my file on mystery men?

Why can't I put it all aside?



And why-- does the only one of us making news anymore--

--have to be Tex Thompson?

"...WHOSE METEORIC RISE IN BOTH THE SENATE AND THE PEOPLES' HEARTS, WAS FURTHERED ON THAT CHILLY MORNING..."



"...FEBRUARY 5TH, 1948... WHEN HE PUT THE 'HERO' BACK IN 'SUPER-HERO.'"

something about him-- I'm uneasy is all. Uneasy.



I'M NOT NOW, NOR EVER HAVE BEEN. ONE TO HIDE BEHIND VEILED WORDS AND POLITICAL RHETORIC. MY OPINIONS... MY POLITICAL GOALS ARE A MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD.

IT'S FOR YOU THE PEOPLE TO DECIDE IF I'M THE MAN YOU WANT TO REPRESENT YOU... IF MY GOALS MIRROR YOUR OWN. YOU KNOW WHERE I STAND ON RUSSIA... THE THREAT TO DEMOCRACY I FEEL IT POSES, AND YOU KNOW I FEEL WE SHOULD MEET THAT THREAT *HEAD ON.*



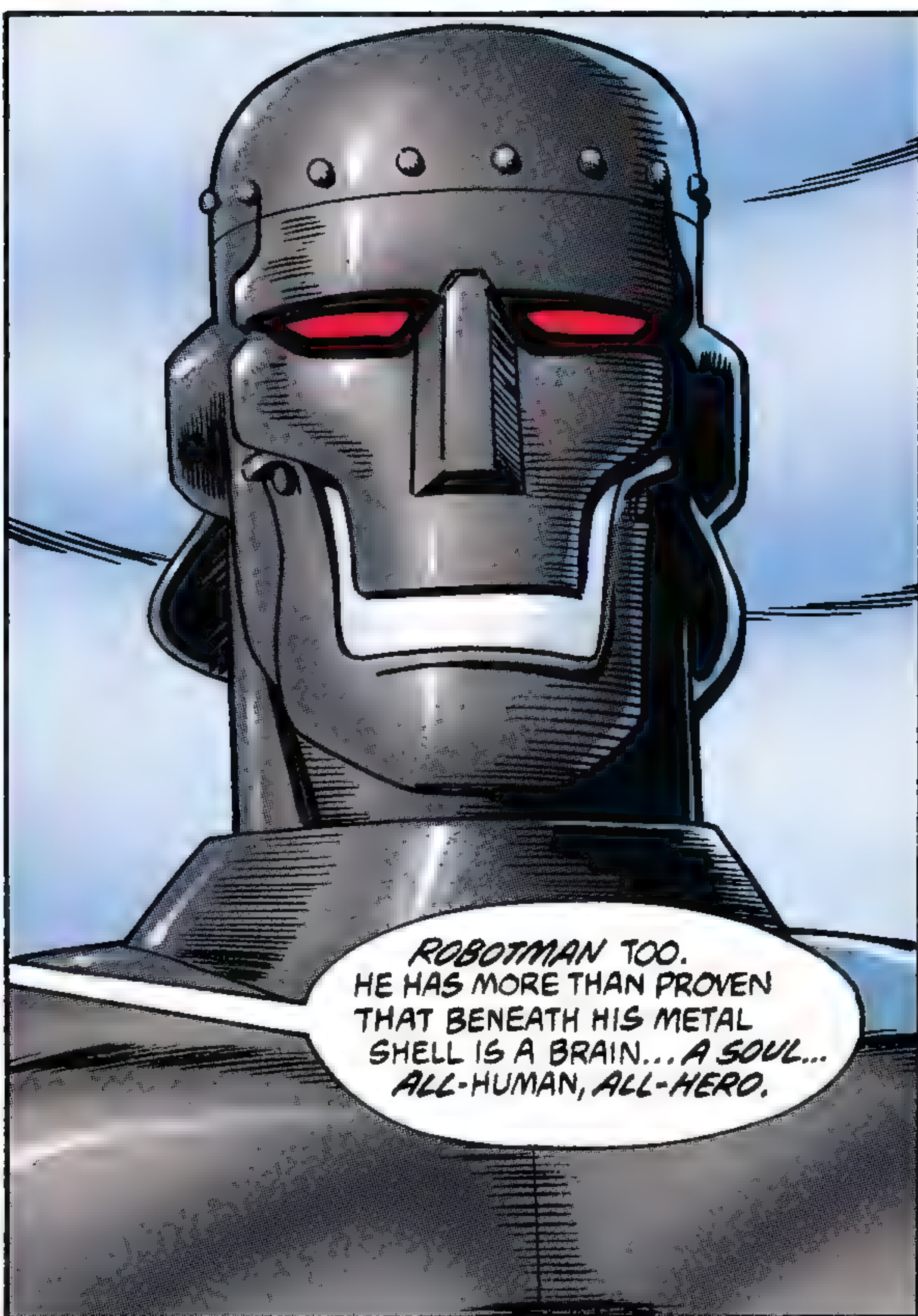
YOU KNOW MY ADMIRATION FOR THE NOBLE... *VALIANT* EFFORTS OF THE *HUAC*, TO KEEP THESE SHORES CLEANSed OF THE BLOODY *RED* STAIN THAT'S SPREADING ACROSS THE REST OF THE WORLD.

THIS LEADS US TO MY DREAM... ALSO PUBLIC RECORD... OF A GOVERNMENT-BACKED GROUP OF MYSTERY MEN AND SUPER-HEROES TO TAKE ON... TO *VANQUISH* THE RUSSIAN THREAT... NATIONALLY OR *INTERNATIONALLY*. ANYWHERE FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ARE WANTING.



YES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THAT *WAS* MY DREAM.

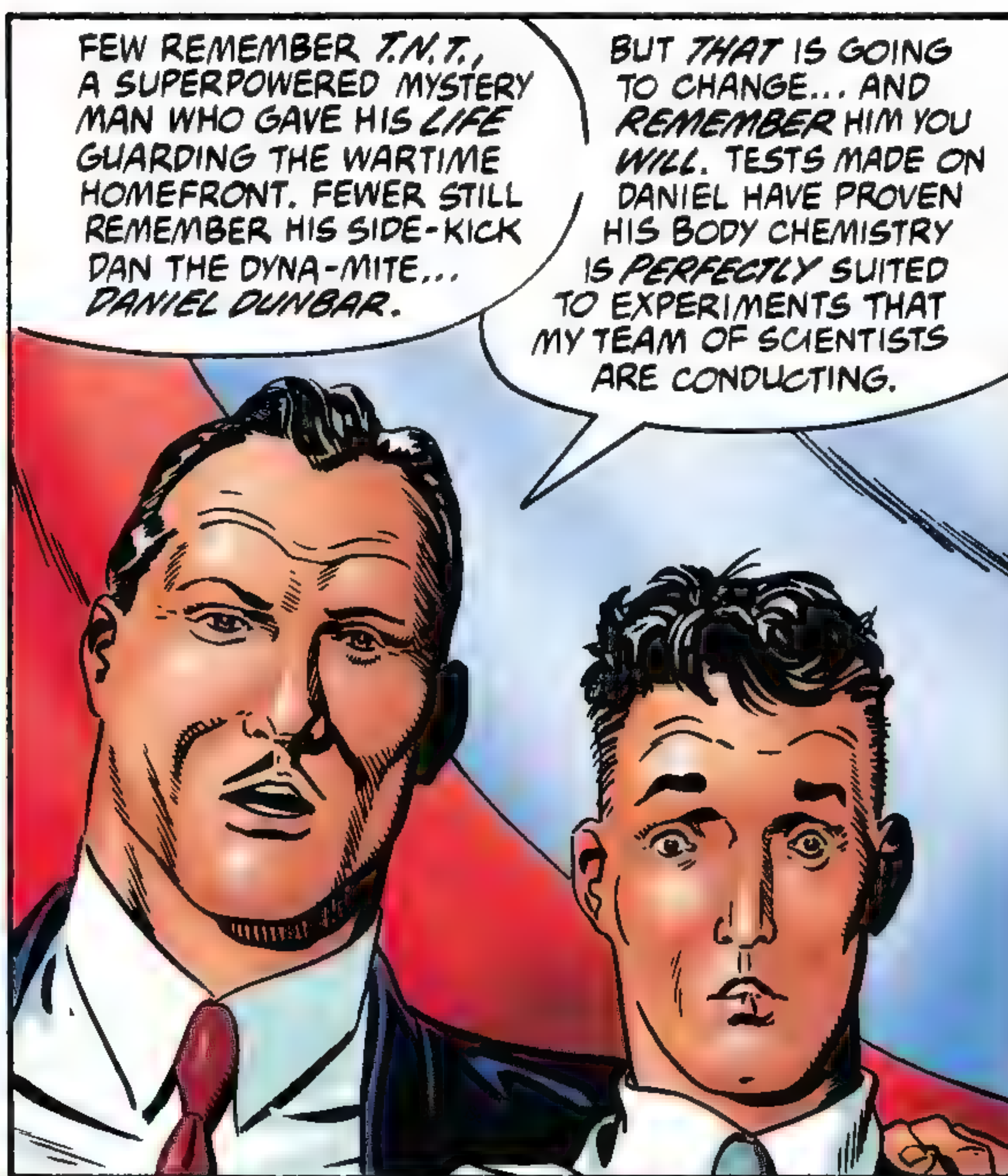
AND NOW...





AND AS FOR *THIS* YOUNG MAN...

STEP FORWARD, DAN. DON'T BE SHY.



FEW REMEMBER *T.N.T.*, A SUPERPOWERED MYSTERY MAN WHO GAVE HIS *LIFE* GUARDING THE WARTIME HOMEFRONT. FEWER STILL REMEMBER HIS SIDE-KICK DAN THE DYNA-MITE... *DANIEL DUNBAR*.

BUT *THAT* IS GOING TO CHANGE... AND REMEMBER HIM YOU *WILL*. TESTS MADE ON DANIEL HAVE PROVEN HIS BODY CHEMISTRY IS PERFECTLY SUITED TO EXPERIMENTS THAT MY TEAM OF SCIENTISTS ARE CONDUCTING.



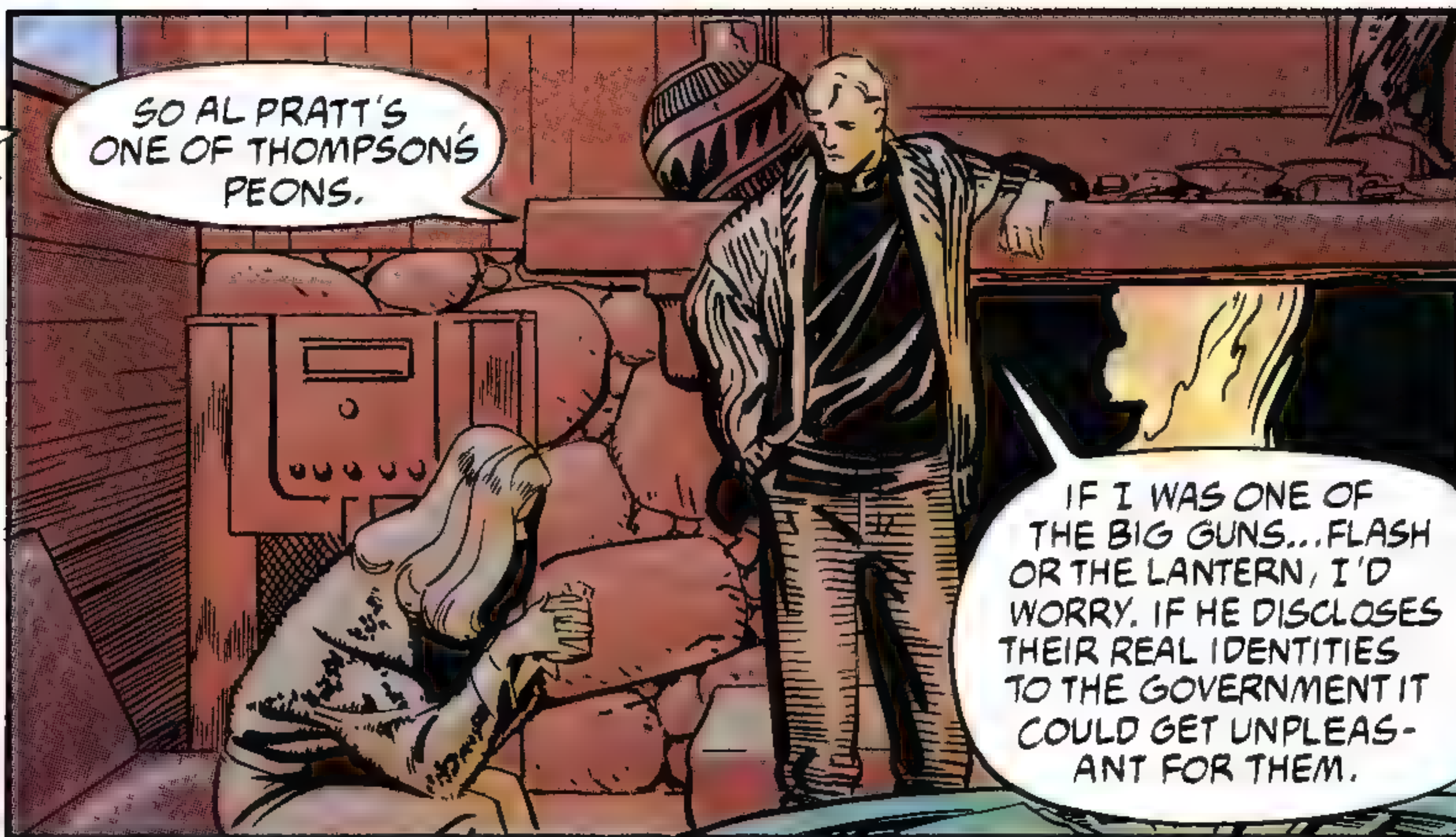
EXPERIMENTS THAT WILL TRANSFORM DANIEL DUNBAR...

...INTO THE GREATEST... *MIGHTIEST* CHAMPION AND PROTECTOR THIS COUNTRY'S EVER SEEN.



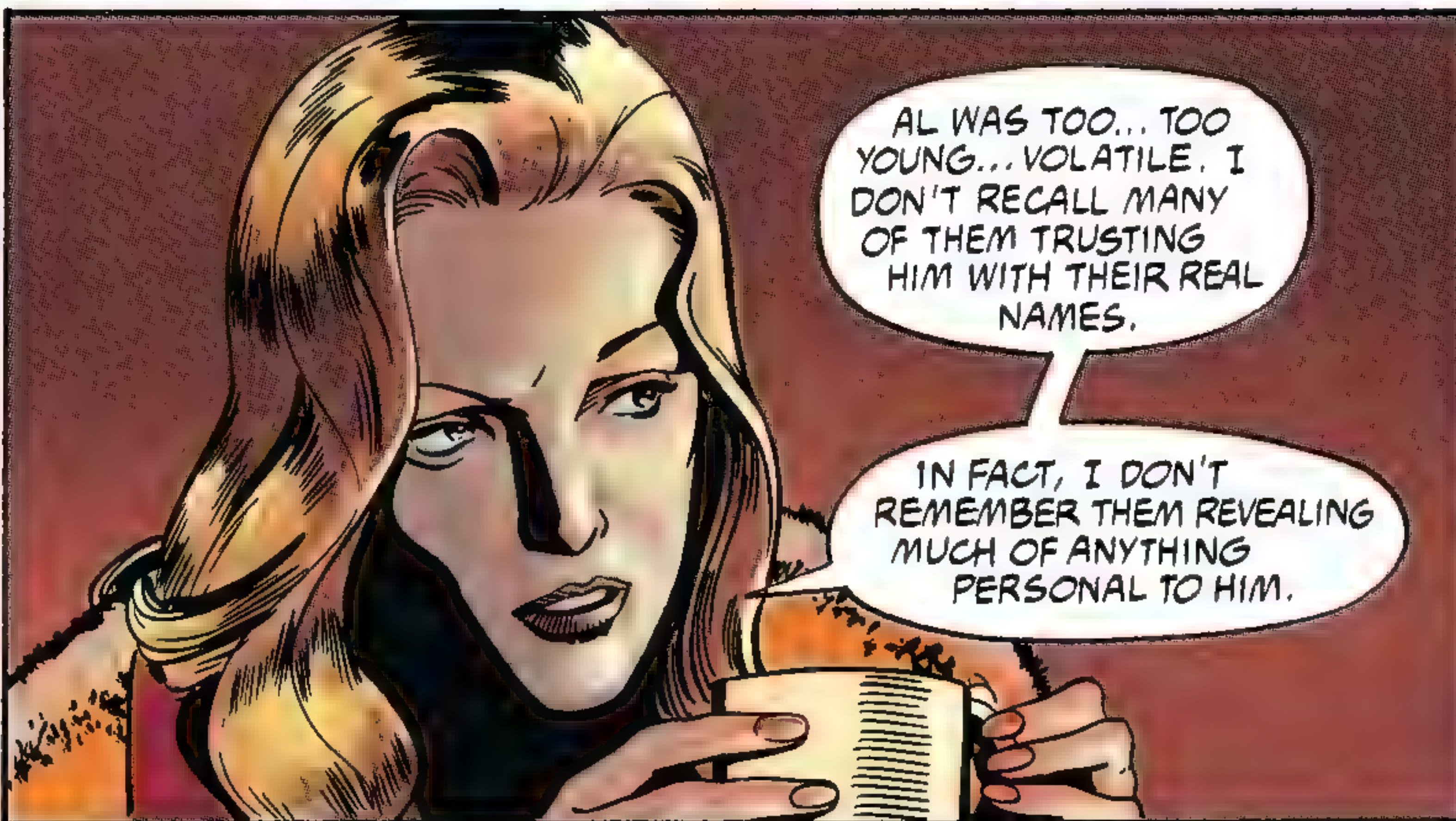
...FURTHER NEWS
TODAY ON THOMPSON'S
NEWLY FORMED,
GOVERNMENT-
BACKED...

...COALITION
OF MYSTERY-
MEN--



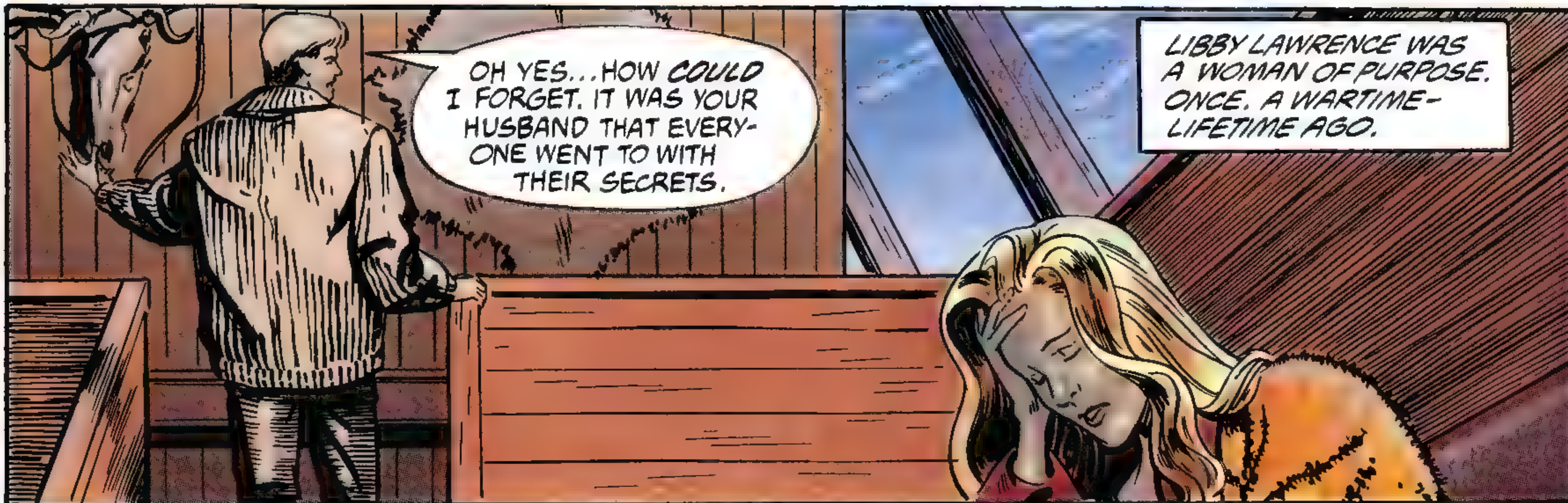
SO AL PRATT'S
ONE OF THOMPSON'S
PEONS.

IF I WAS ONE OF
THE BIG GUNS... FLASH
OR THE LANTERN, I'D
WORRY. IF HE DISCLOSES
THEIR REAL IDENTITIES
TO THE GOVERNMENT IT
COULD GET UNPLEAS-
ANT FOR THEM.



AL WAS TOO... TOO
YOUNG... VOLATILE. I
DON'T RECALL MANY
OF THEM TRUSTING
HIM WITH THEIR REAL
NAMES.

IN FACT, I DON'T
REMEMBER THEM REVEALING
MUCH OF ANYTHING
PERSONAL TO HIM.



OH YES... HOW COULD
I FORGET. IT WAS YOUR
HUSBAND THAT EVERY-
ONE WENT TO WITH
THEIR SECRETS.

LIBBY LAWRENCE WAS
A WOMAN OF PURPOSE.
ONCE. A WARTIME-
LIFETIME AGO.



HER
HUSBAND.

THE WORDS
LEAVE AN
AFTERTASTE
OF PEPPER
AND JEALOUSY
ON JONATHAN
LAW'S TONGUE.



SOMETHING.



NEED
SOMETHING...
TO RINSE MY
MOUTH WITH.

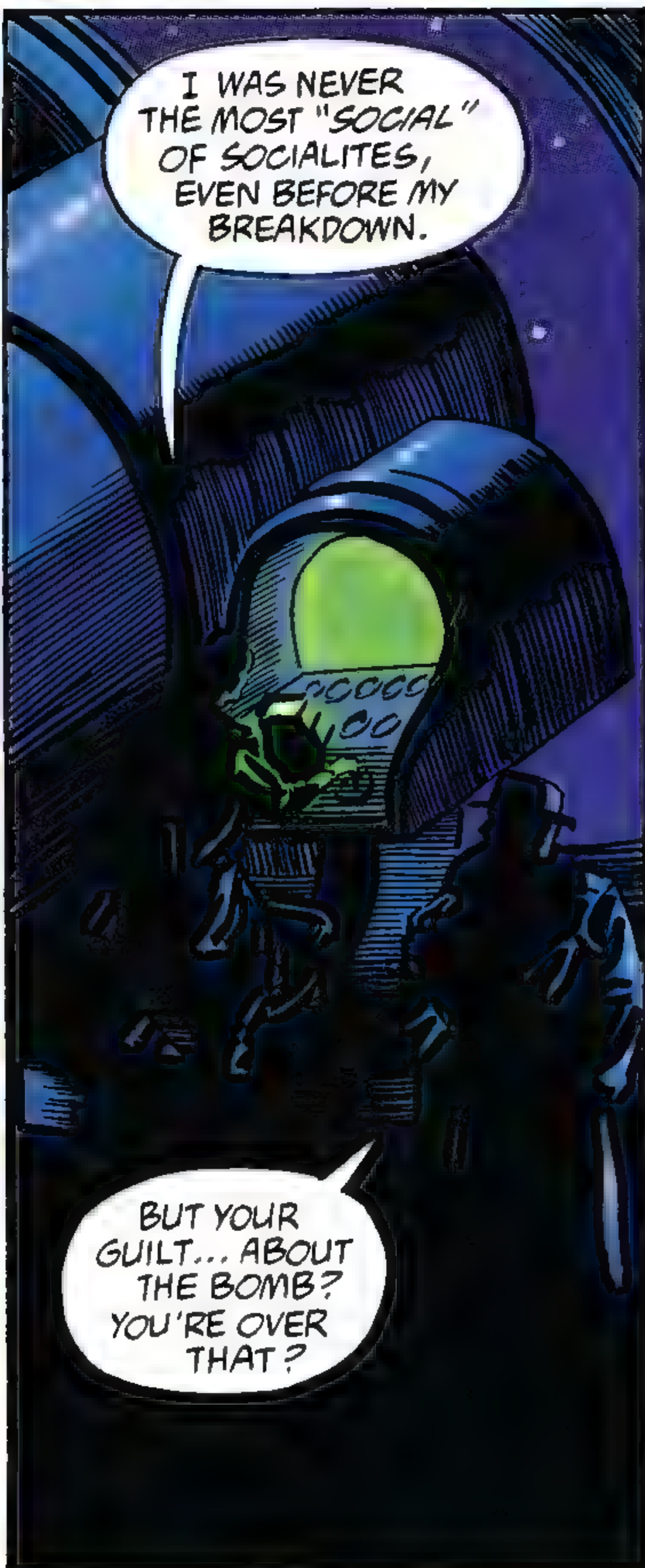
NEVERTHELESS...
LAW'S RIGHT...



JOHNNY CHAMBERS WAS THE ONE PEOPLE WENT TO WITH THEIR PROBLEMS... AND SECRETS.

HE STILL IS.

I KNOW IT'S REMOTE, JOHNNY... BUT THAT'S THE WAY I LIKE IT... WANT IT. REALLY.



I WAS NEVER THE MOST "SOCIAL" OF SOCIALITES, EVEN BEFORE MY BREAKDOWN.

BUT YOUR GUILT... ABOUT THE BOMB? YOU'RE OVER THAT?

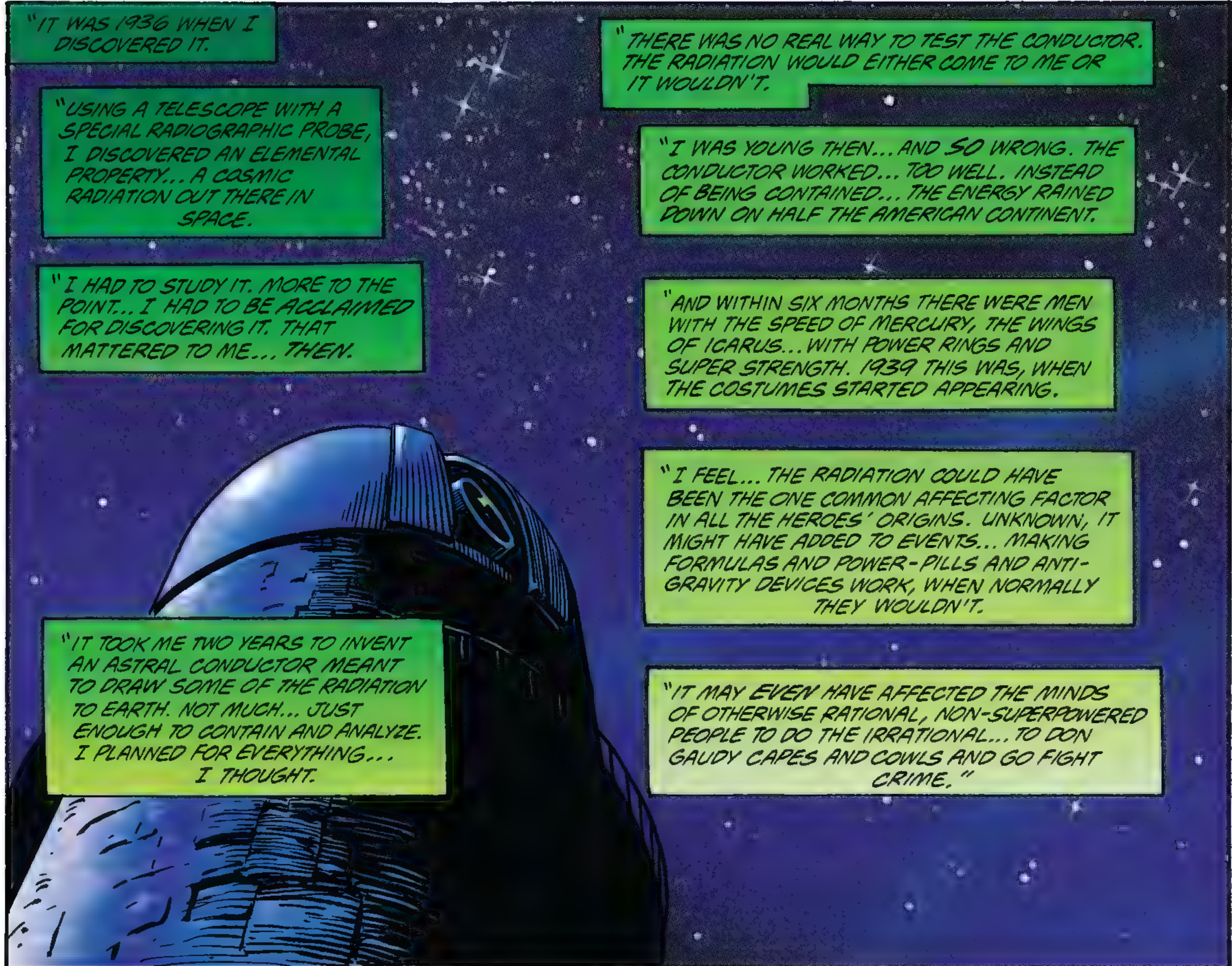


THE BOMB, I GUESS... BUT THE GUILT? I...I'M NOT SURE.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, AREN'T THEY ONE AND THE SAME?

TED SIGHS, AND JOHNNY LIGHTS A CIGARETTE.

TED TALKS, AND JOHNNY LISTENS.



"IT WAS 1936 WHEN I DISCOVERED IT.

"USING A TELESCOPE WITH A SPECIAL RADIOGRAPHIC PROBE, I DISCOVERED AN ELEMENTAL PROPERTY... A COSMIC RADIATION OUT THERE IN SPACE.

"I HAD TO STUDY IT. MORE TO THE POINT... I HAD TO BE ACCLAIMED FOR DISCOVERING IT. THAT MATTERED TO ME... THEN.

"IT TOOK ME TWO YEARS TO INVENT AN ASTRAL CONDUCTOR MEANT TO DRAW SOME OF THE RADIATION TO EARTH. NOT MUCH... JUST ENOUGH TO CONTAIN AND ANALYZE. I PLANNED FOR EVERYTHING... I THOUGHT.

"THERE WAS NO REAL WAY TO TEST THE CONDUCTOR. THE RADIATION WOULD EITHER COME TO ME OR IT WOULDN'T.

"I WAS YOUNG THEN... AND SO WRONG. THE CONDUCTOR WORKED... TOO WELL. INSTEAD OF BEING CONTAINED... THE ENERGY RAINED DOWN ON HALF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT.

"AND WITHIN SIX MONTHS THERE WERE MEN WITH THE SPEED OF MERCURY, THE WINGS OF ICARUS... WITH POWER RINGS AND SUPER STRENGTH. 1939 THIS WAS, WHEN THE COSTUMES STARTED APPEARING.

"I FEEL... THE RADIATION COULD HAVE BEEN THE ONE COMMON AFFECTING FACTOR IN ALL THE HEROES' ORIGINS. UNKNOWN, IT MIGHT HAVE ADDED TO EVENTS... MAKING FORMULAS AND POWER-PILLS AND ANTI-GRAVITY DEVICES WORK, WHEN NORMALLY THEY WOULDN'T.

"IT MAY EVEN HAVE AFFECTED THE MINDS OF OTHERWISE RATIONAL, NON-SUPERPOWERED PEOPLE TO DO THE IRRATIONAL... TO DON GAUDY CAPES AND COWLS AND GO FIGHT CRIME."



THAT I MAY HAVE CAUSED ALL THIS--IT'S MY DREAD, JOHNNY, MY SECRET FE--

NONSENSE IS WHAT IT IS, TED! WHERE IS THIS RADIATION? DID YOU GET ANY TO STUDY?

A LITTLE. IT ALSO HELPED CREATE MY GRAVITY ROD. BUT IT WAS TOO VOLATILE... HARD TO CONTAIN. IT SOON DISSIPATED...



TED, GET A GRIP, EH. STOP LOOKING FOR WAYS TO BLAME YOURSELF--THE BIRTH OF THE SUPER-HERO, THE BIRTH OF THE BOMB.

THINGS HAPPEN CAUSE THEY HAPPEN. THAT'S ALL.

I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME.

HOW CAN I--?



DON'T WORRY, I DON'T THINK OF YOU AS ANY LESS OF A FRIEND. COME. LET'S CHANGE... BOTH SUBJECT AND ROOM.

MY RESEARCH IS ALMOST COMPLETE.



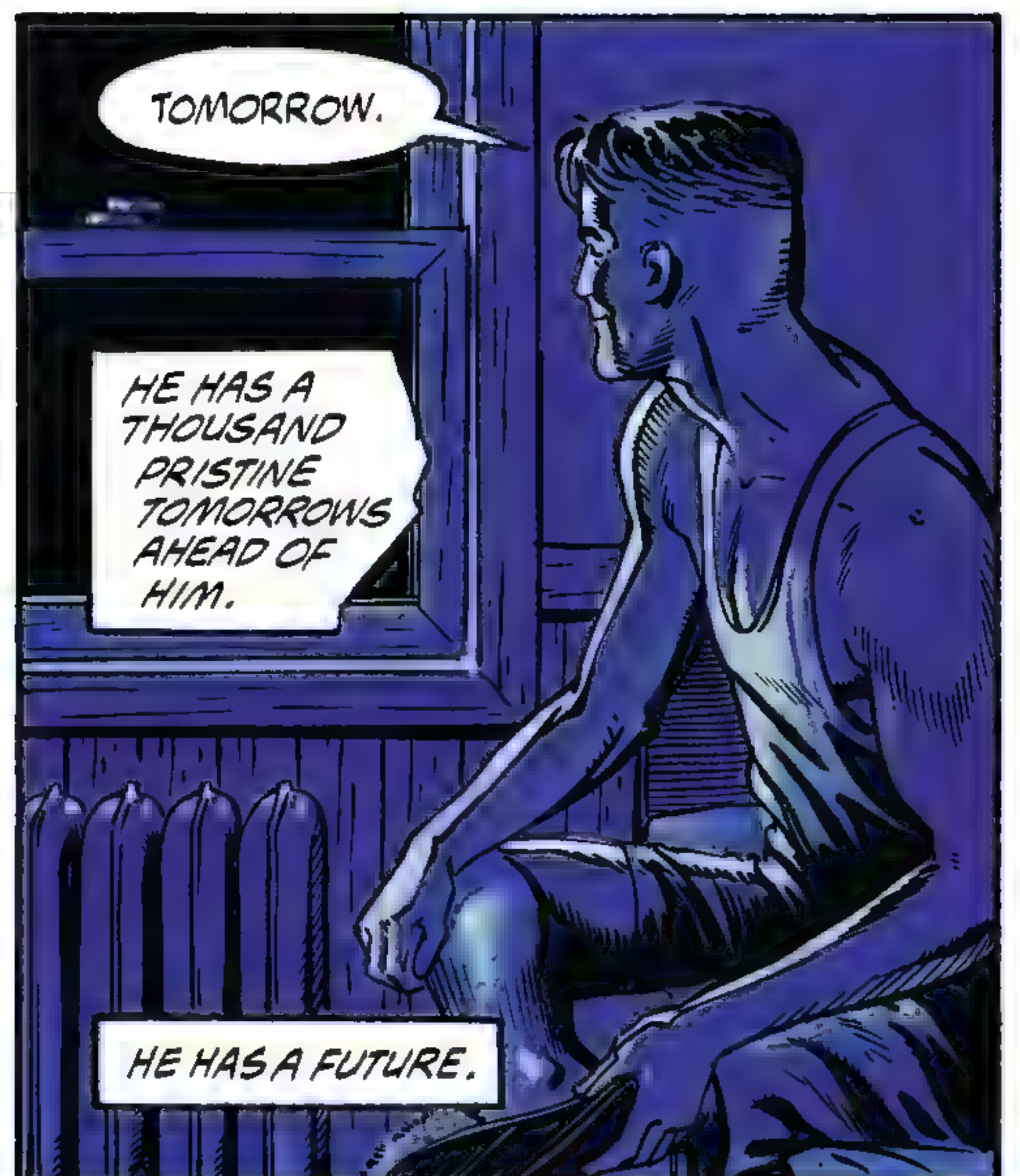
RESEARCH? THE STUFF YOU WERE WORKING ON AT NIGHT IN THE SANAT--ER--THE REST-HOME?

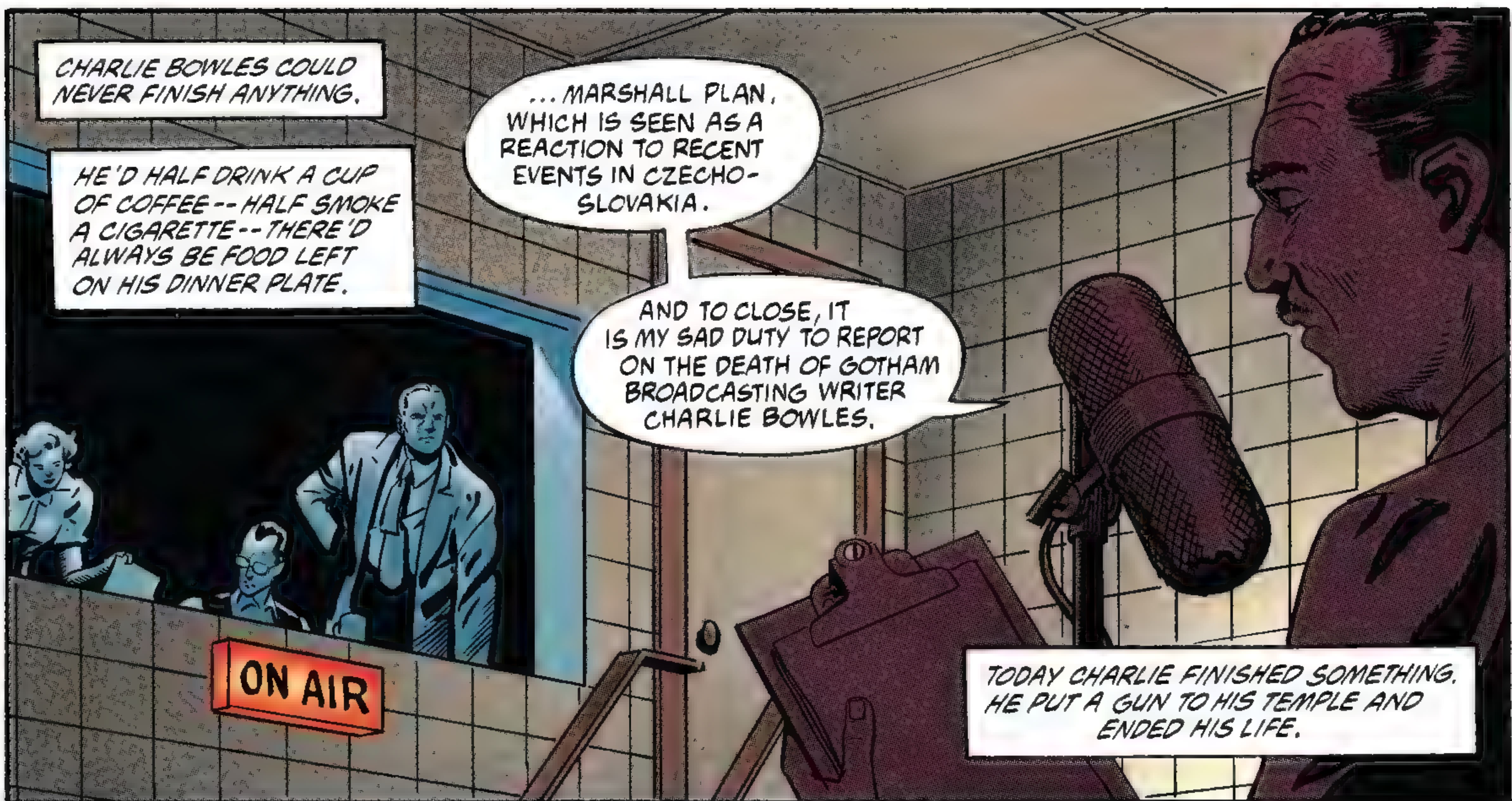
IN THE SANATORIUM, YES. I FEEL GUILTY ABOUT IT... ABOUT *FURTHER* DEVELOPING EINSTEIN'S THEORIES. BUT I'M COMPELLED... THE SCIENTIST IN ME.

SO YOU'RE HAPPY HERE? ALONE LIKE THIS?

I HAVE THE STARS.

BUT I'M NOT ALONE, JOHNNY.





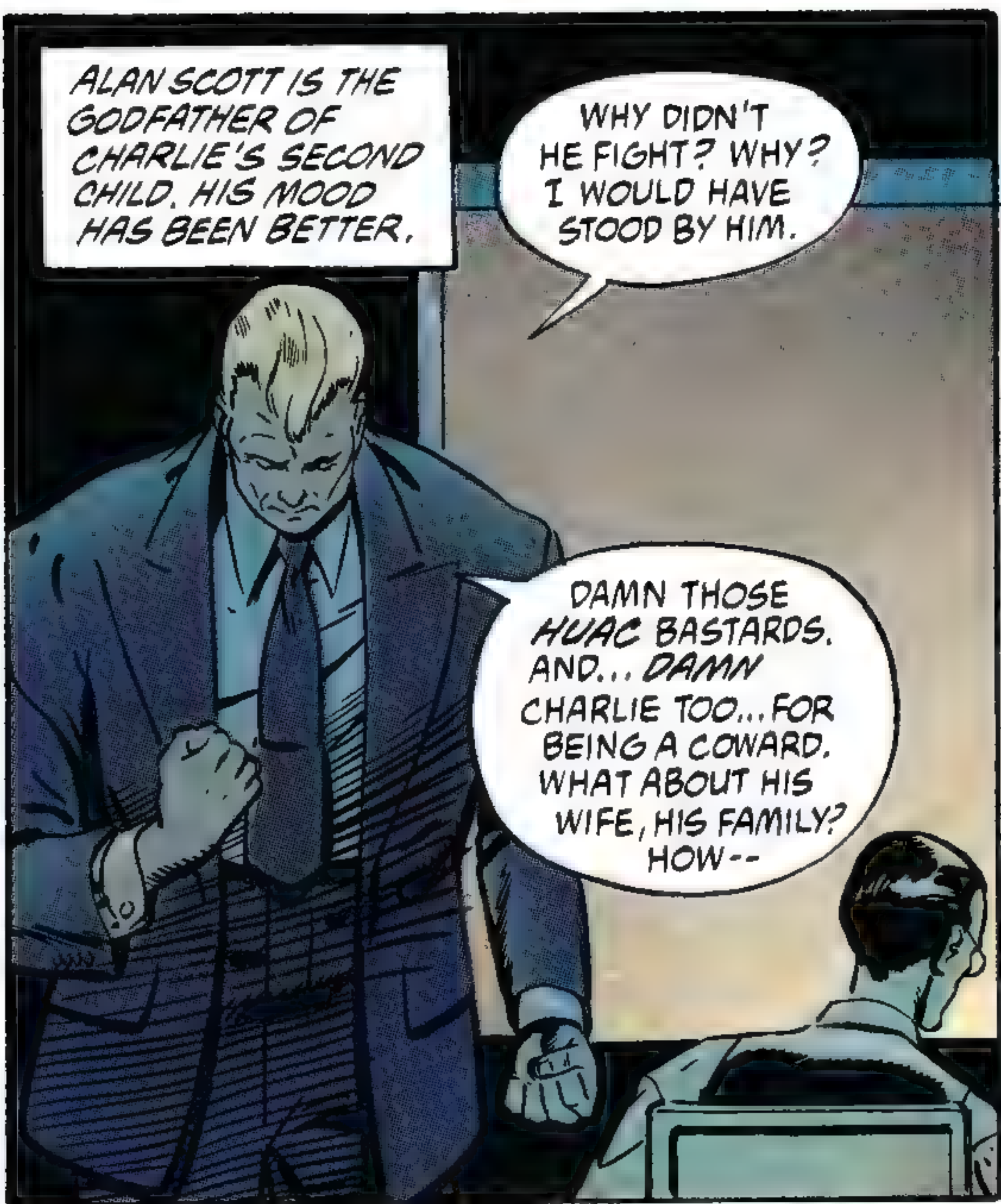
CHARLIE BOWLES COULD NEVER FINISH ANYTHING.

HE'D HALF DRINK A CUP OF COFFEE -- HALF SMOKE A CIGARETTE -- THERE'D ALWAYS BE FOOD LEFT ON HIS DINNER PLATE.

... MARSHALL PLAN, WHICH IS SEEN AS A REACTION TO RECENT EVENTS IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

AND TO CLOSE, IT IS MY SAD DUTY TO REPORT ON THE DEATH OF GOTHAM BROADCASTING WRITER CHARLIE BOWLES.

TODAY CHARLIE FINISHED SOMETHING. HE PUT A GUN TO HIS TEMPLE AND ENDED HIS LIFE.



ALAN SCOTT IS THE GODFATHER OF CHARLIE'S SECOND CHILD. HIS MOOD HAS BEEN BETTER.

WHY DIDN'T HE FIGHT? WHY? I WOULD HAVE STOOD BY HIM.

DAMN THOSE HUAC BASTARDS. AND... DAMN CHARLIE TOO... FOR BEING A COWARD. WHAT ABOUT HIS WIFE, HIS FAMILY? HOW--



MR. SCOTT! YOU WON'T BELIEVE -- DOWNSTAIRS -- THE JEWELERS -- A ROBBERY!

ROBBERY?

AND THE THIEF--! I-IT'S...



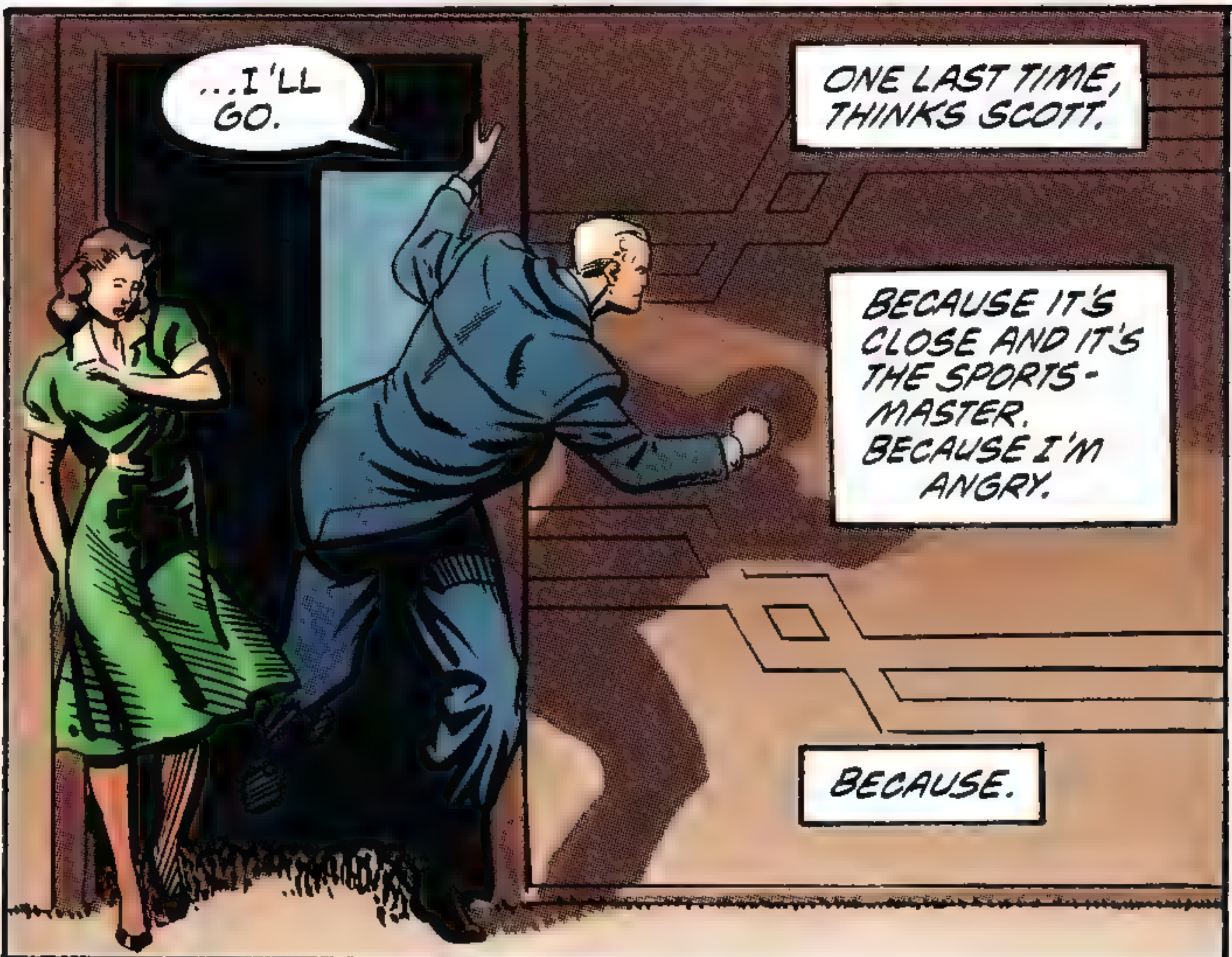
...THE SPORTSMASTER.



WE NEED SOMEONE TO COVER THIS.

MOSELY'S AROUND, I'LL--

NO...



...I'LL GO.

ONE LAST TIME, THINK'S SCOTT.

BECAUSE IT'S CLOSE AND IT'S THE SPORTS-MASTER. BECAUSE I'M ANGRY.

BECAUSE.



THE ALARMS WENT OFF SIX MINUTES AGO. THE POLICE WON'T BE HERE FOR ANOTHER FIVE.

IT'S GOTHAM CITY, REMEMBER.

NOBODY MOVES, NOBODY DIES.

AS FOR LAWRENCE CROCK... THE SPORTSMAN...



STACY

... THIS IS HIS LAST CRIME.



DON'T MOVE!

ABE STORY KNOWS THE CASHIERS JOKE ABOUT HIM BEHIND HIS BACK. THEY SAY HE'S OLD... SLOW.

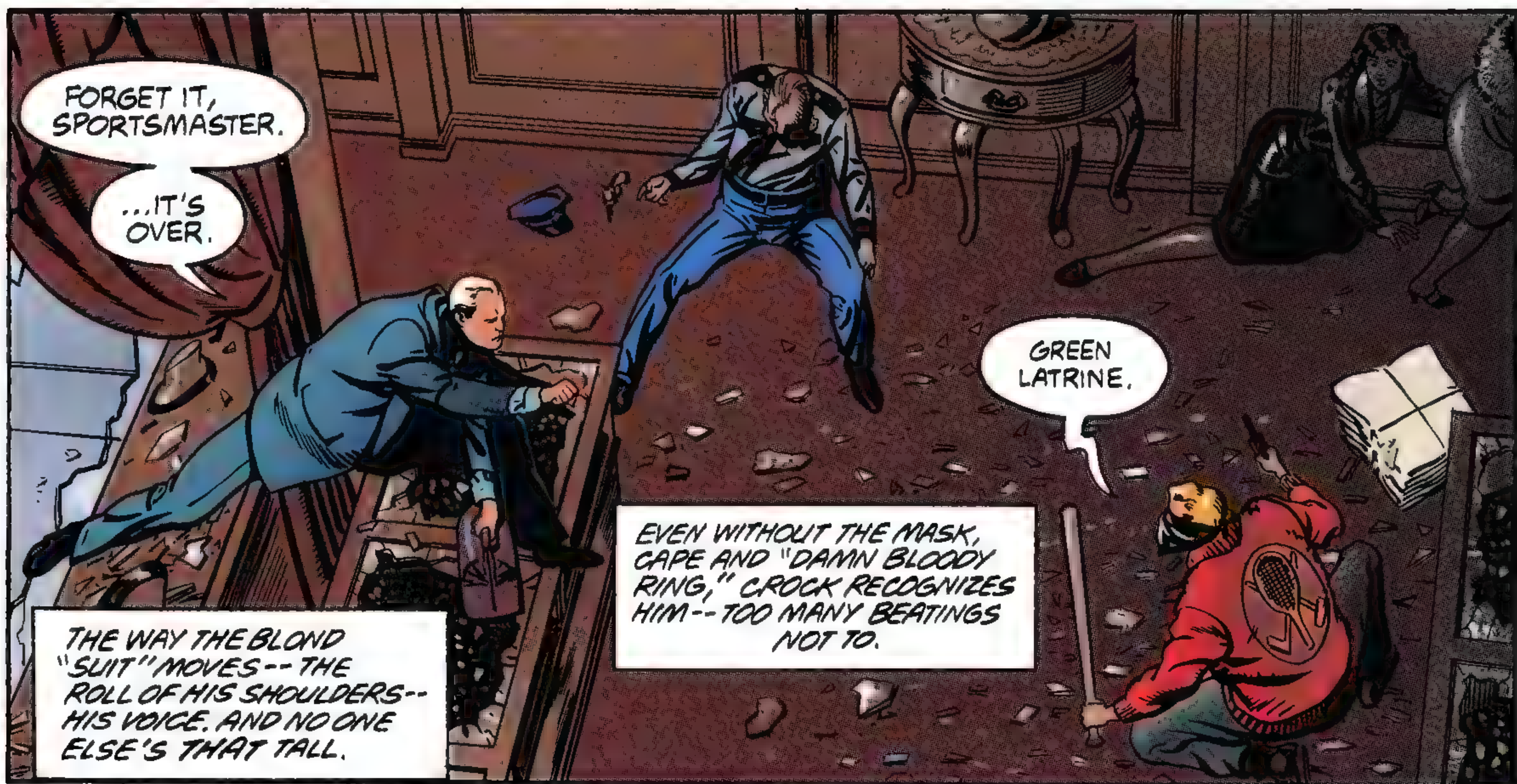


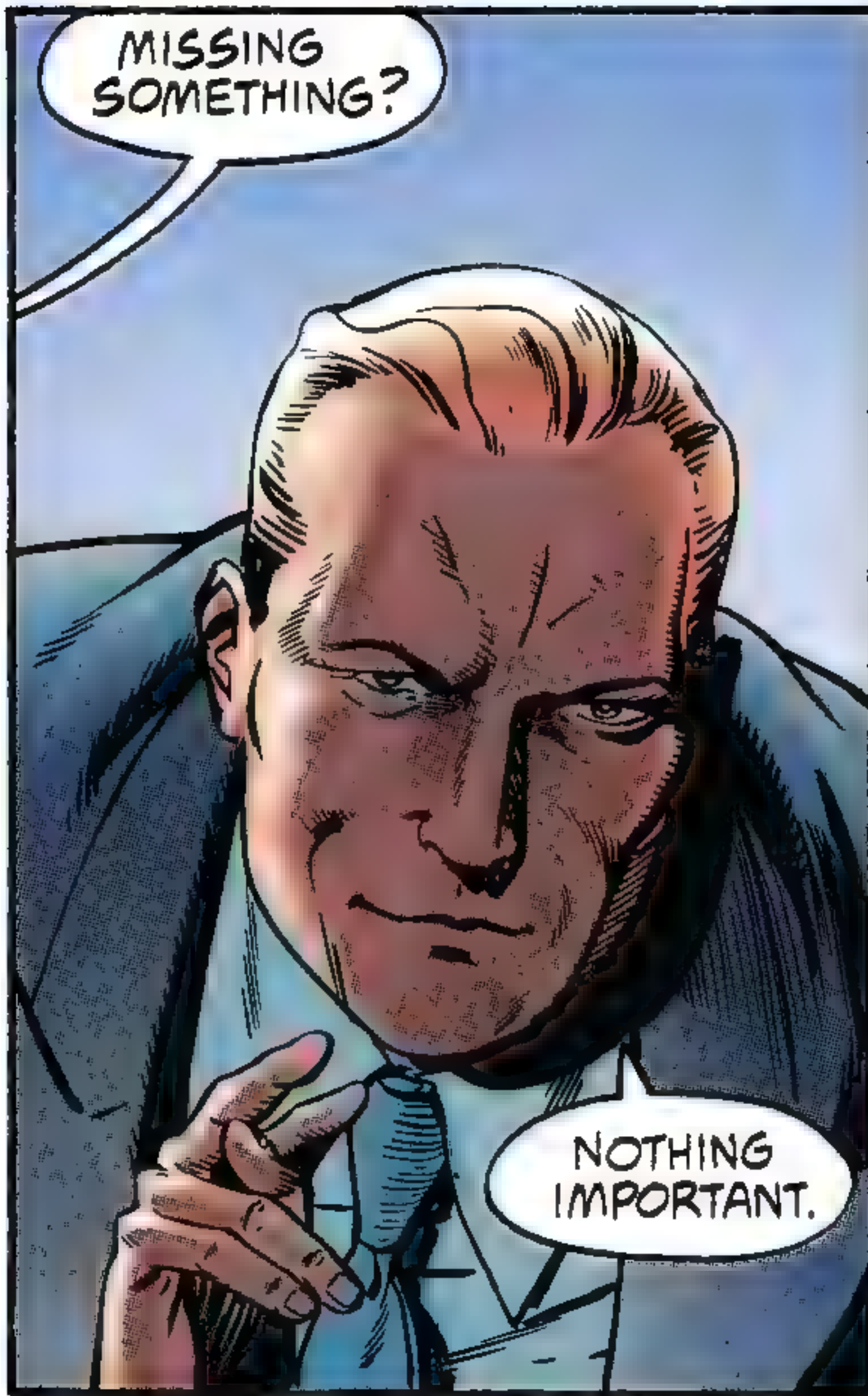
NOW'S HIS CHANCE TO PROVE THEM WRONG...

SHOTS!

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

THINK... MOVE FAST... GOT TO...







FOR HIS DAUGHTER'S
SAKE, CROCK
KNOWS HE CAN'T
GIVE UP.



BESIDES--
NO RING MEANS
PAYBACK.



IN A FAIR FIGHT HE'D
WIN, THINKS CROCK.

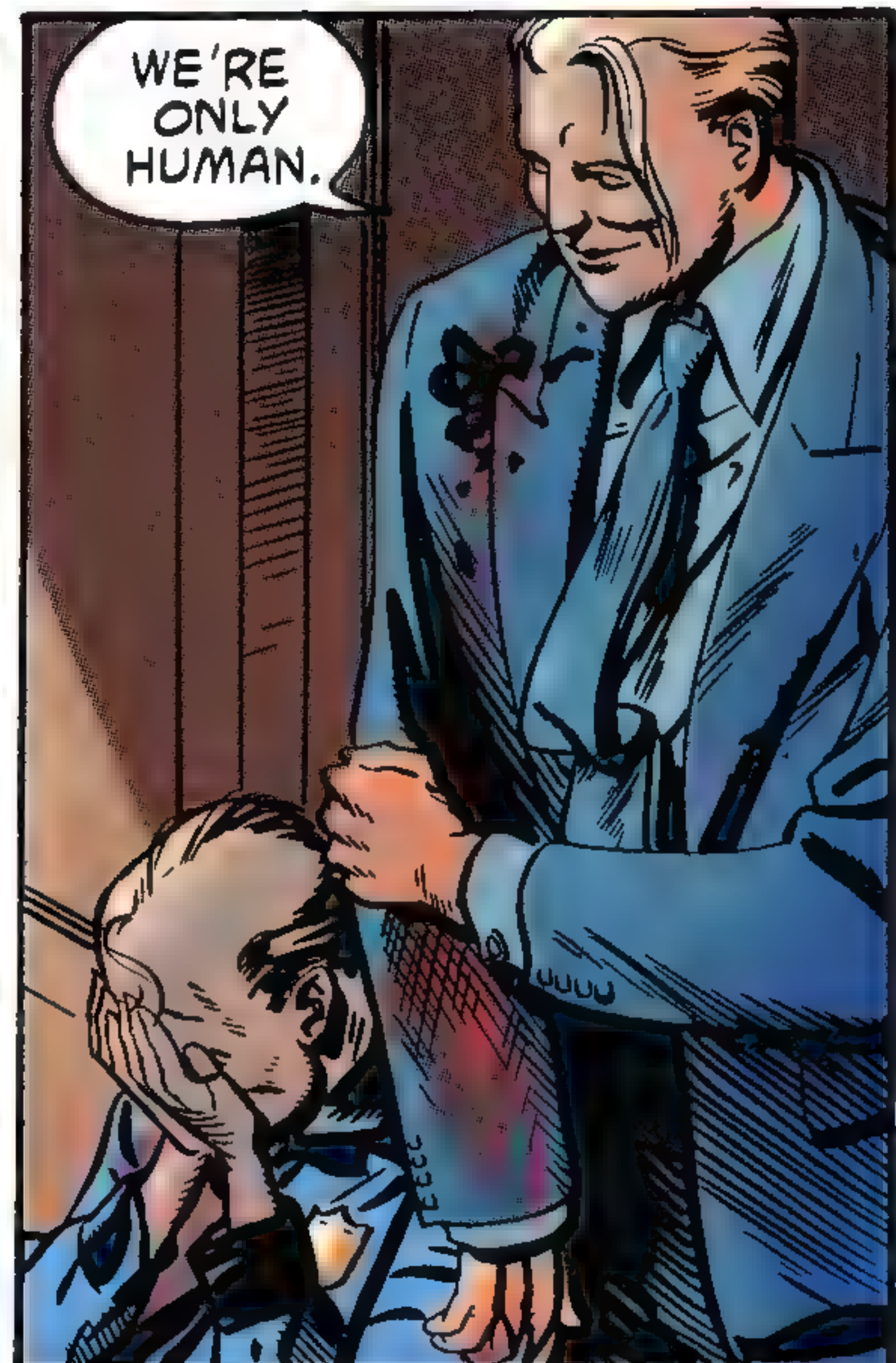


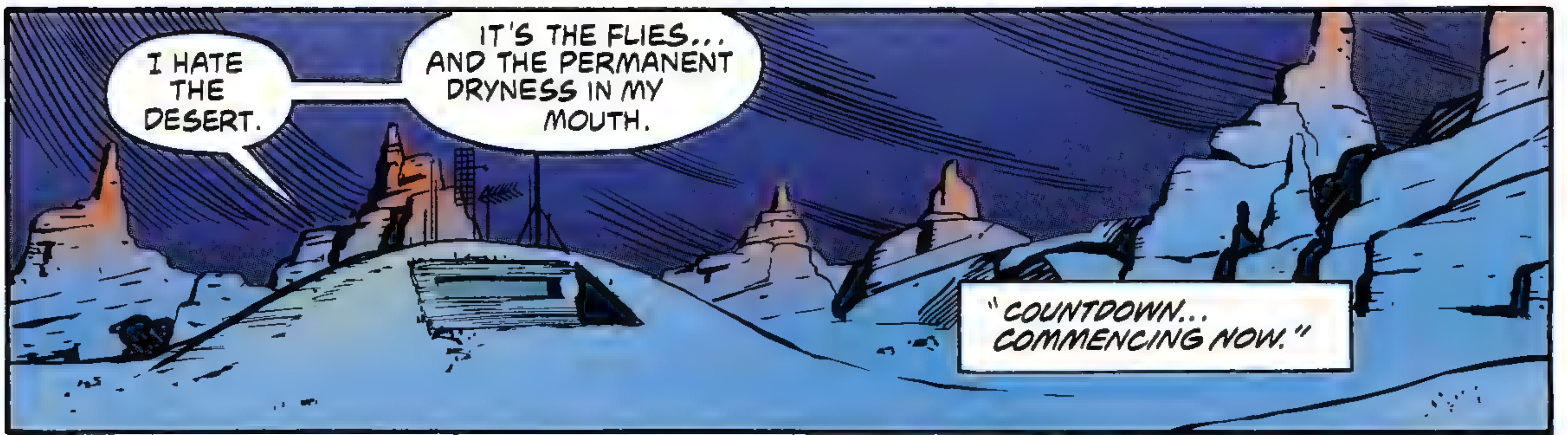
BUT THE CRESCENDO WAIL
OF SIRENS... THE NEED
TO ESCAPE...



... MEANS THIS FIGHT
CAN'T BE FAIR.

ADIOS.





I HATE THE DESERT.

IT'S THE FLIES... AND THE PERMANENT DRYNESS IN MY MOUTH.

"COUNTDOWN... COMMENCING NOW."



I HATE THE WAITING, TOO.

IT'S ALL *SUCH* A GAMBLE... THERE'S NO WAY WE COULD TEST WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO.

THERE'S ONLY ONE DUNBAR... ONE TIME... ONE CHANCE.



GOD, I HOPE THIS WORKS.

GOD... I'M SURE... WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.

"...SEVEN... SIX... FIVE... FOUR..."



"...THREE..."

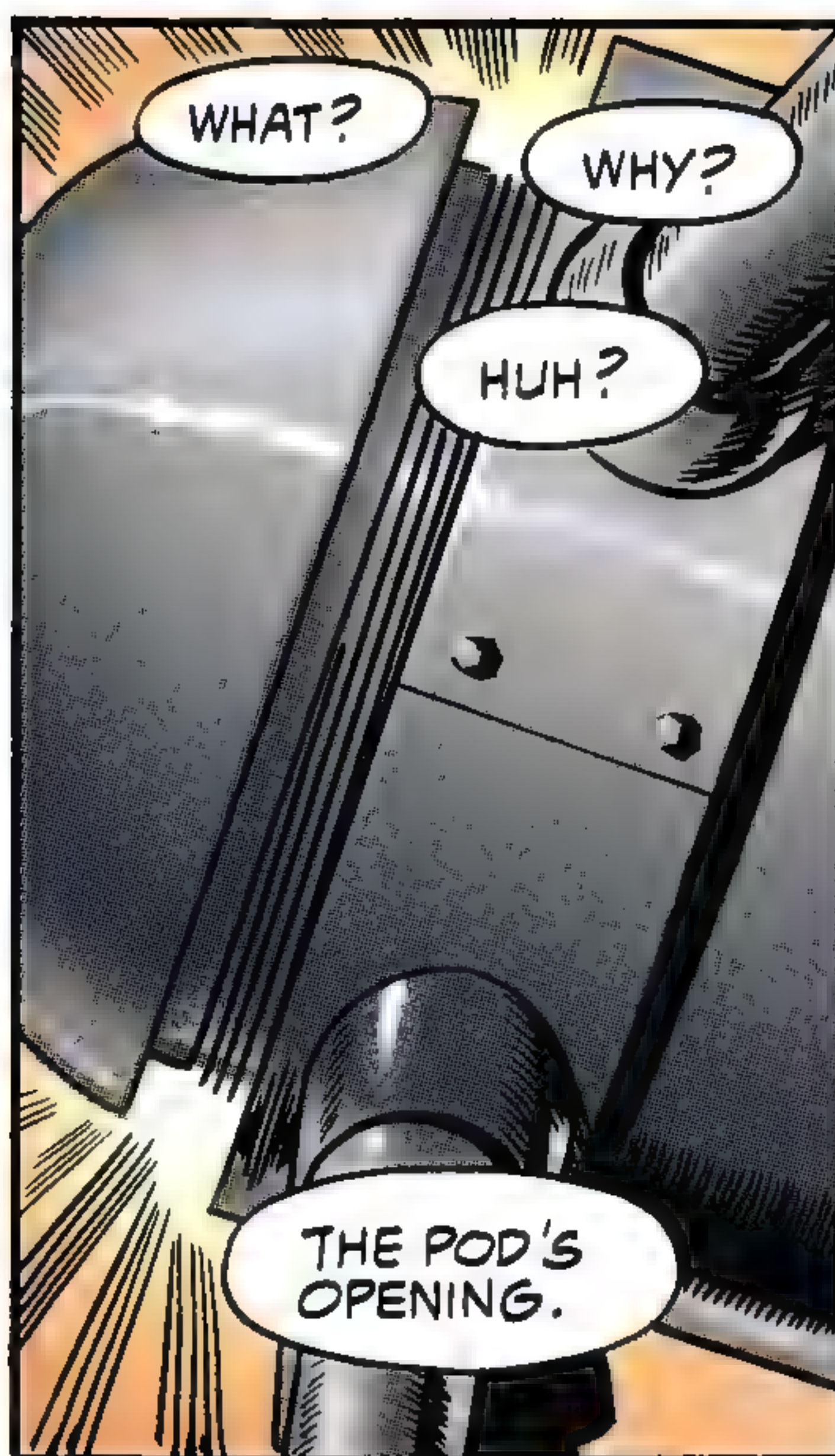
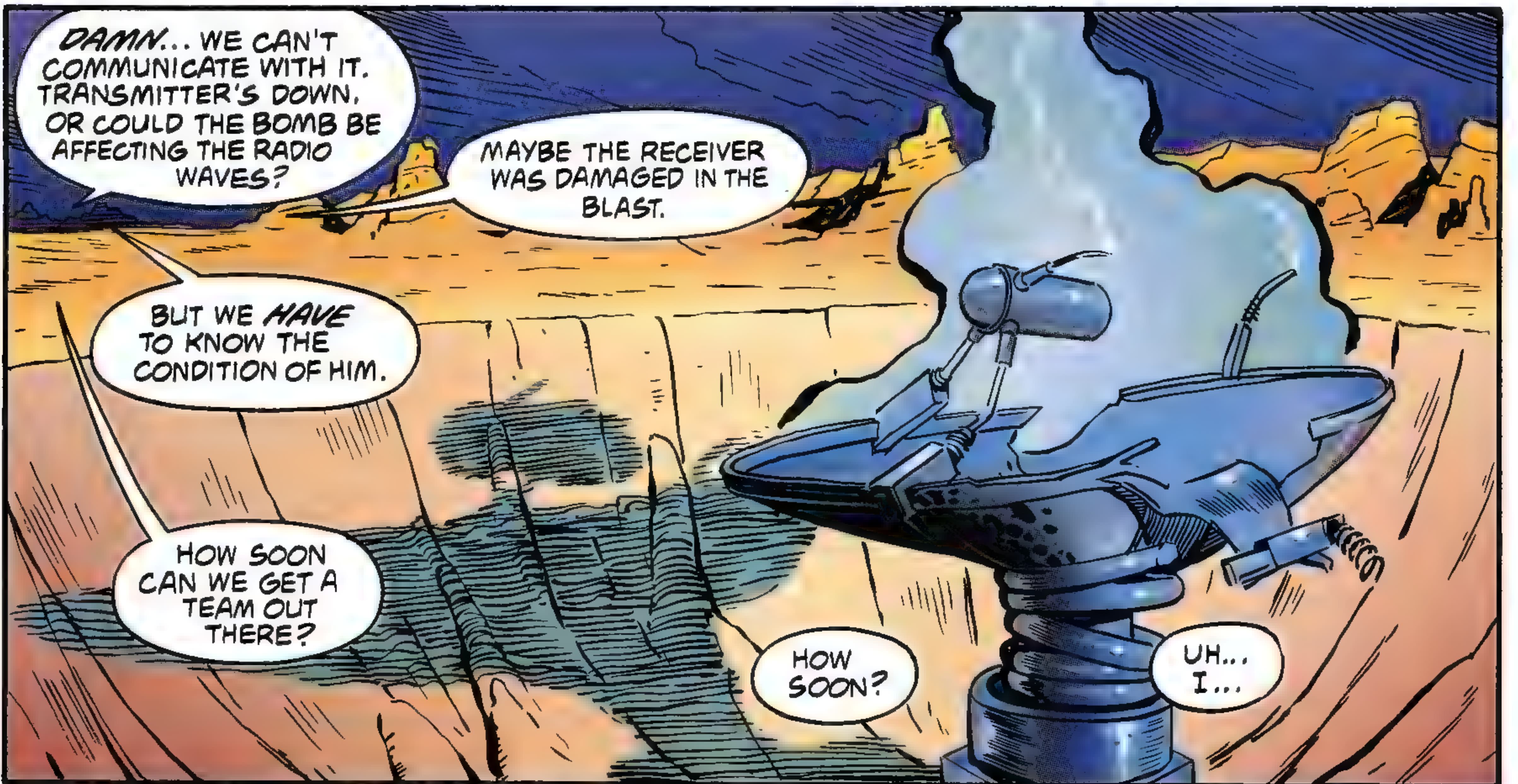


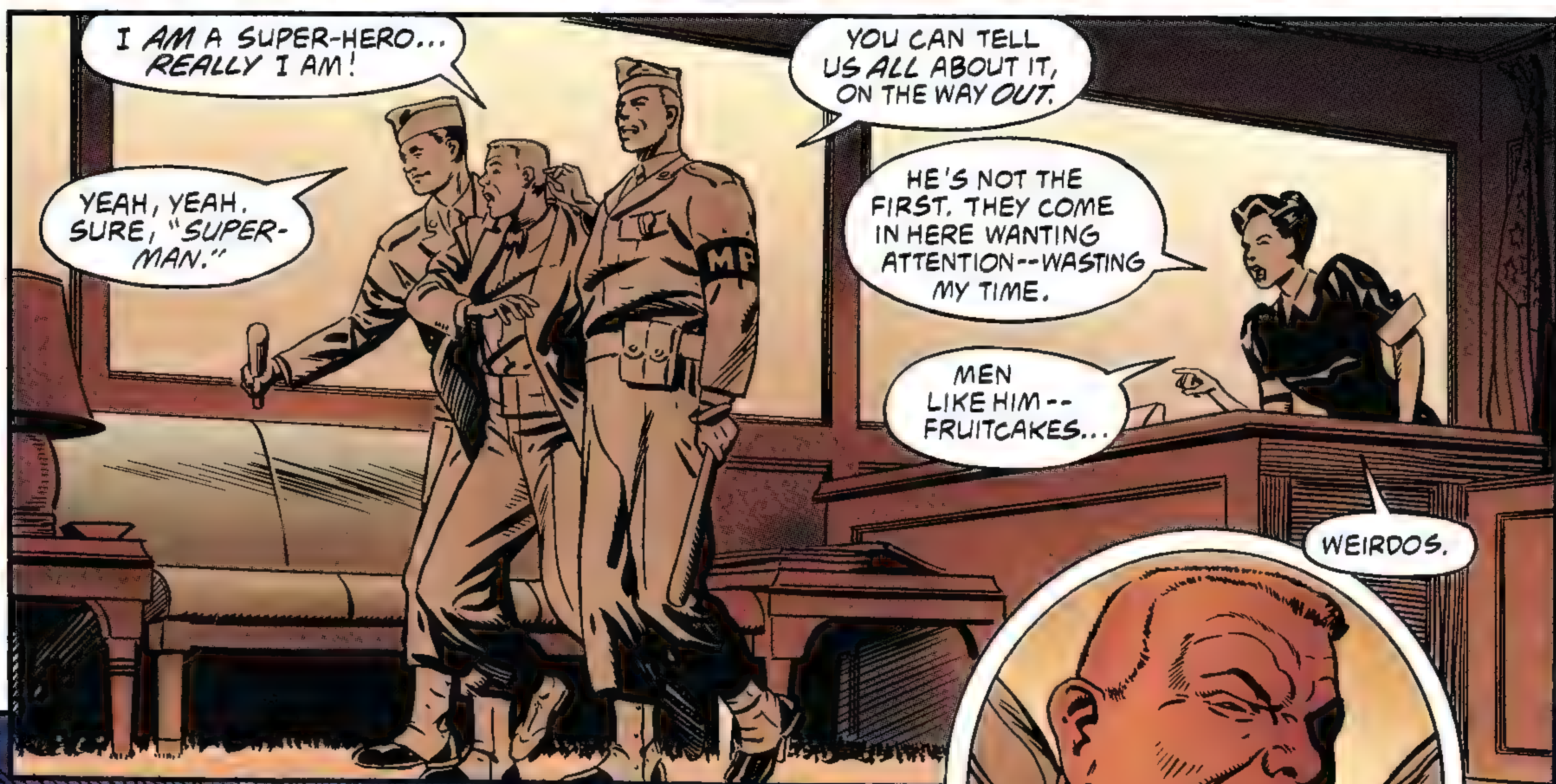
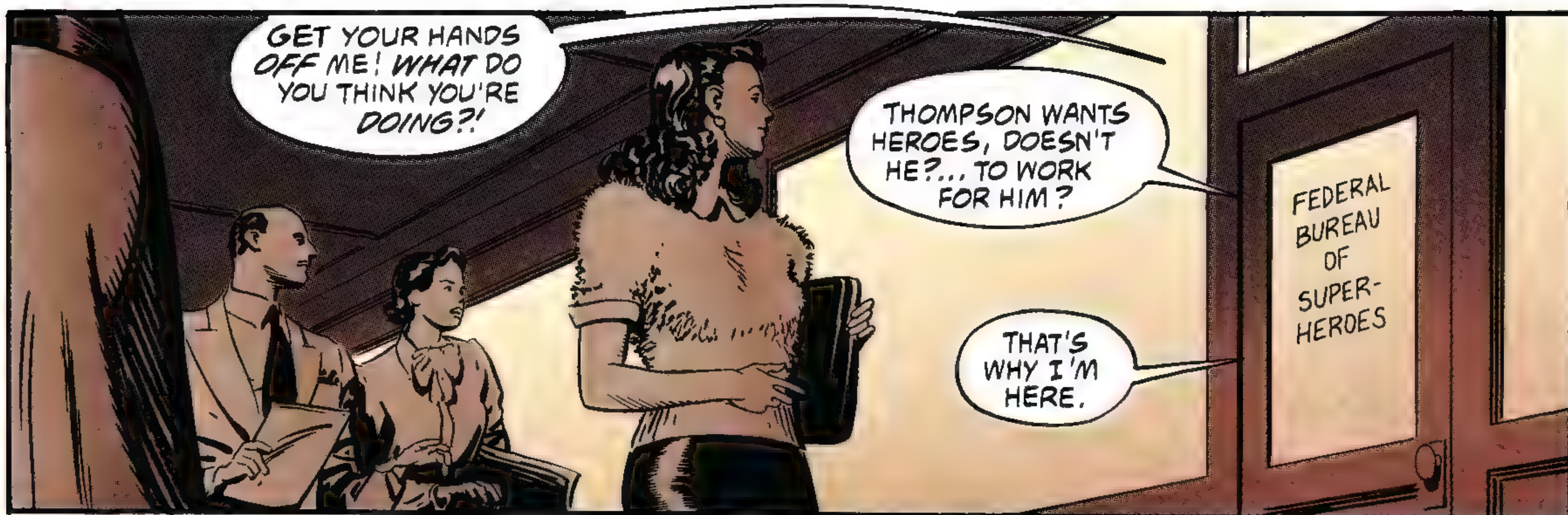
"...TWO..."



"...ONE."









WHAT IN GOD'S NAME--

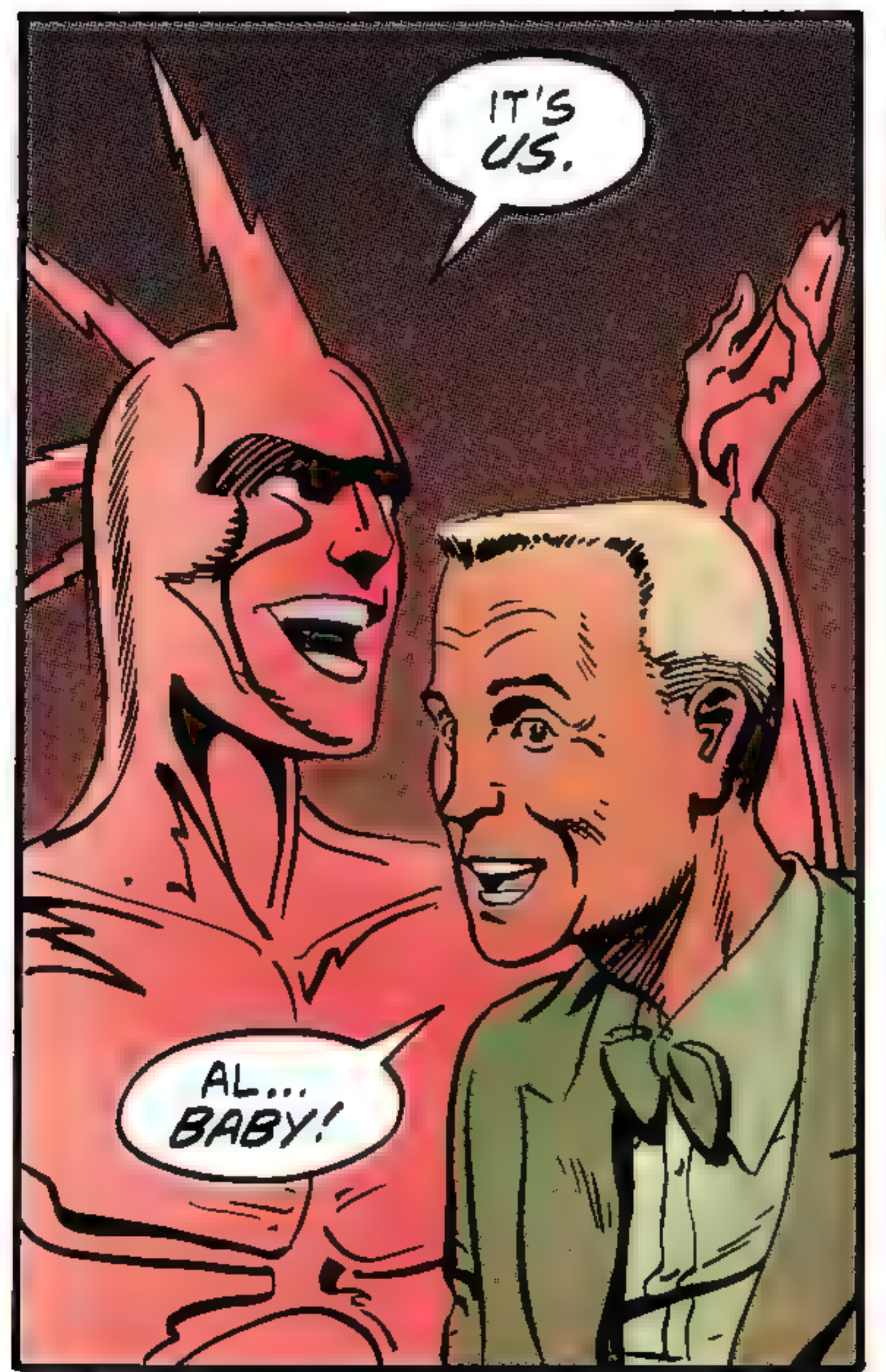
I'M SORRY, MR. PRATT.

HE SAID HE WAS... I DIDN'T BELIEVE... I'M SO SOR--



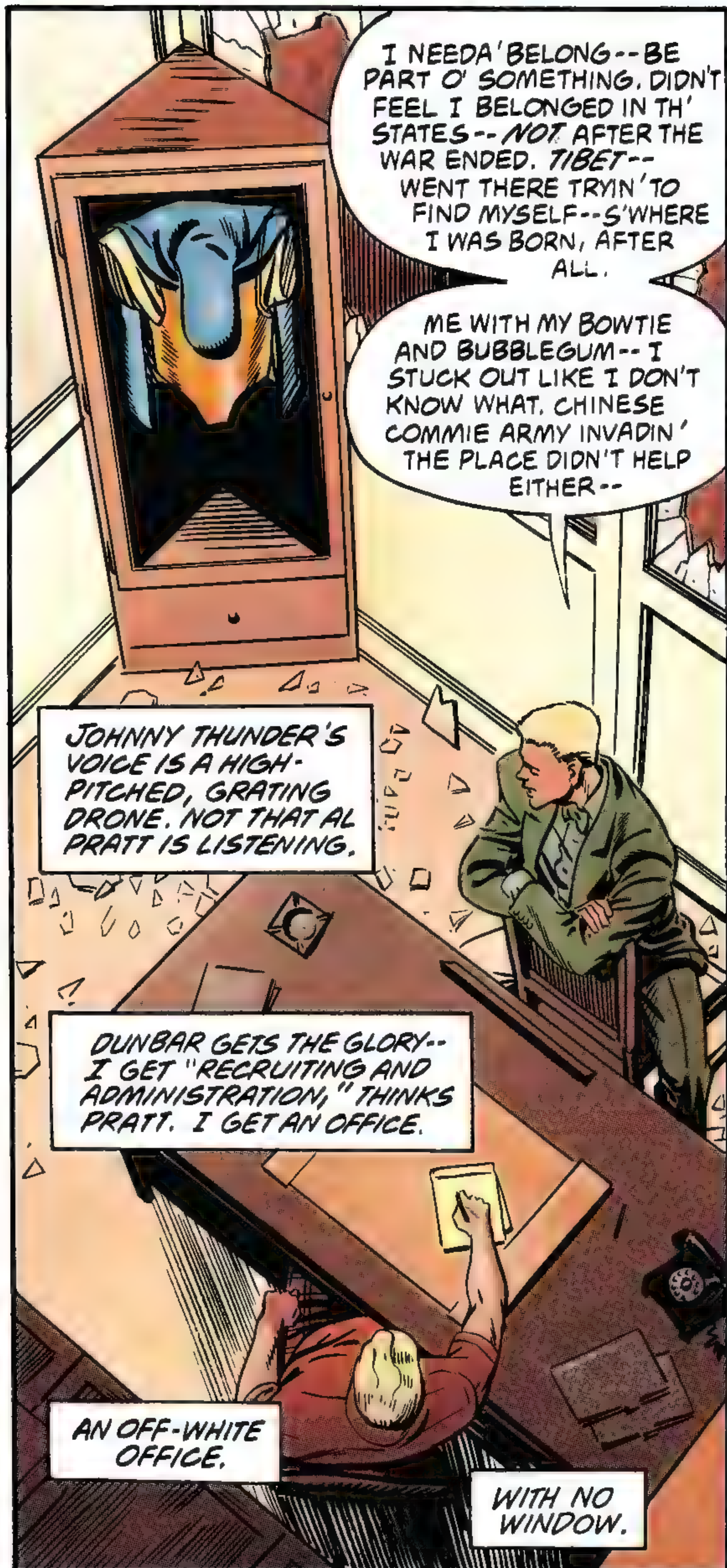
OH...

...IT'S YOU.



IT'S US.

AL... BABY!



I NEEDA' BELONG--BE PART O' SOMETHING. DIDN'T FEEL I BELONGED IN TH' STATES-- NOT AFTER THE WAR ENDED. TIBET-- WENT THERE TRYIN' TO FIND MYSELF--S'WHERE I WAS BORN, AFTER ALL.

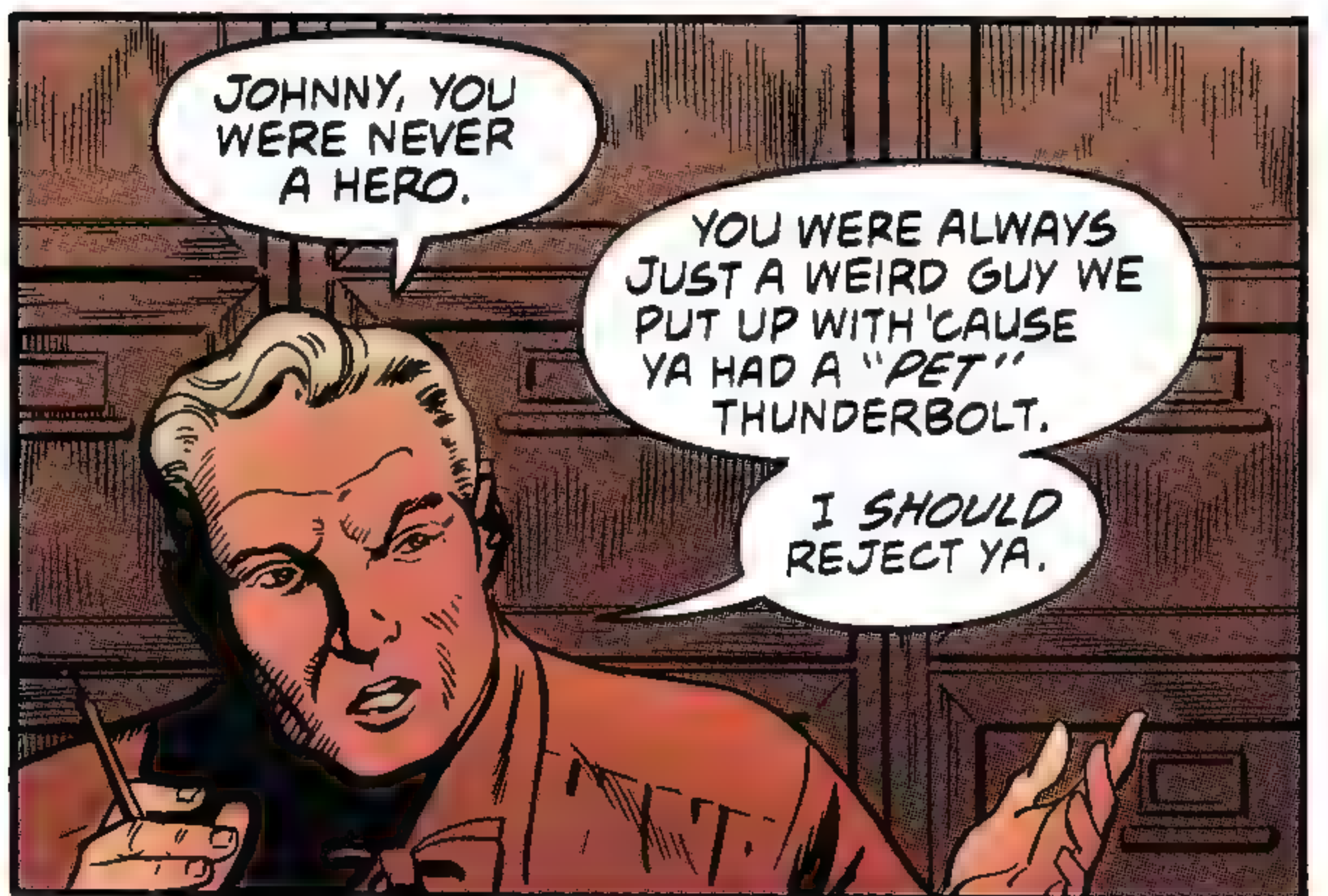
ME WITH MY BOWTIE AND BUBBLEGUM-- I STUCK OUT LIKE I DON'T KNOW WHAT. CHINESE COMMIE ARMY INVADIN' THE PLACE DIDN'T HELP EITHER--

JOHNNY THUNDER'S VOICE IS A HIGH-PITCHED, GRATING DRONE. NOT THAT AL PRATT IS LISTENING.

DUNBAR GETS THE GLORY-- I GET "RECRUITING AND ADMINISTRATION," THINKS PRATT. I GET AN OFFICE.

AN OFF-WHITE OFFICE.

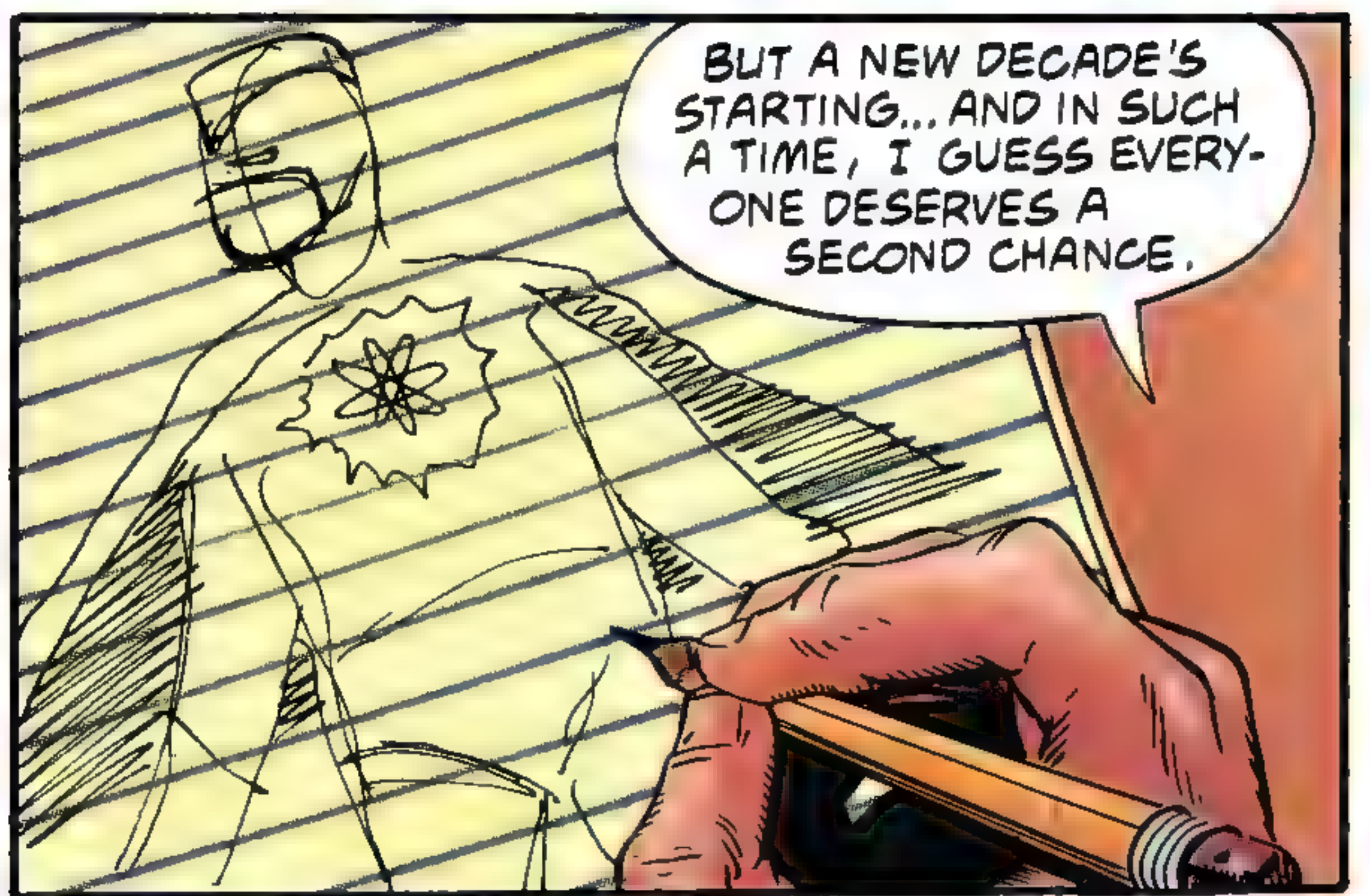
WITH NO WINDOW.



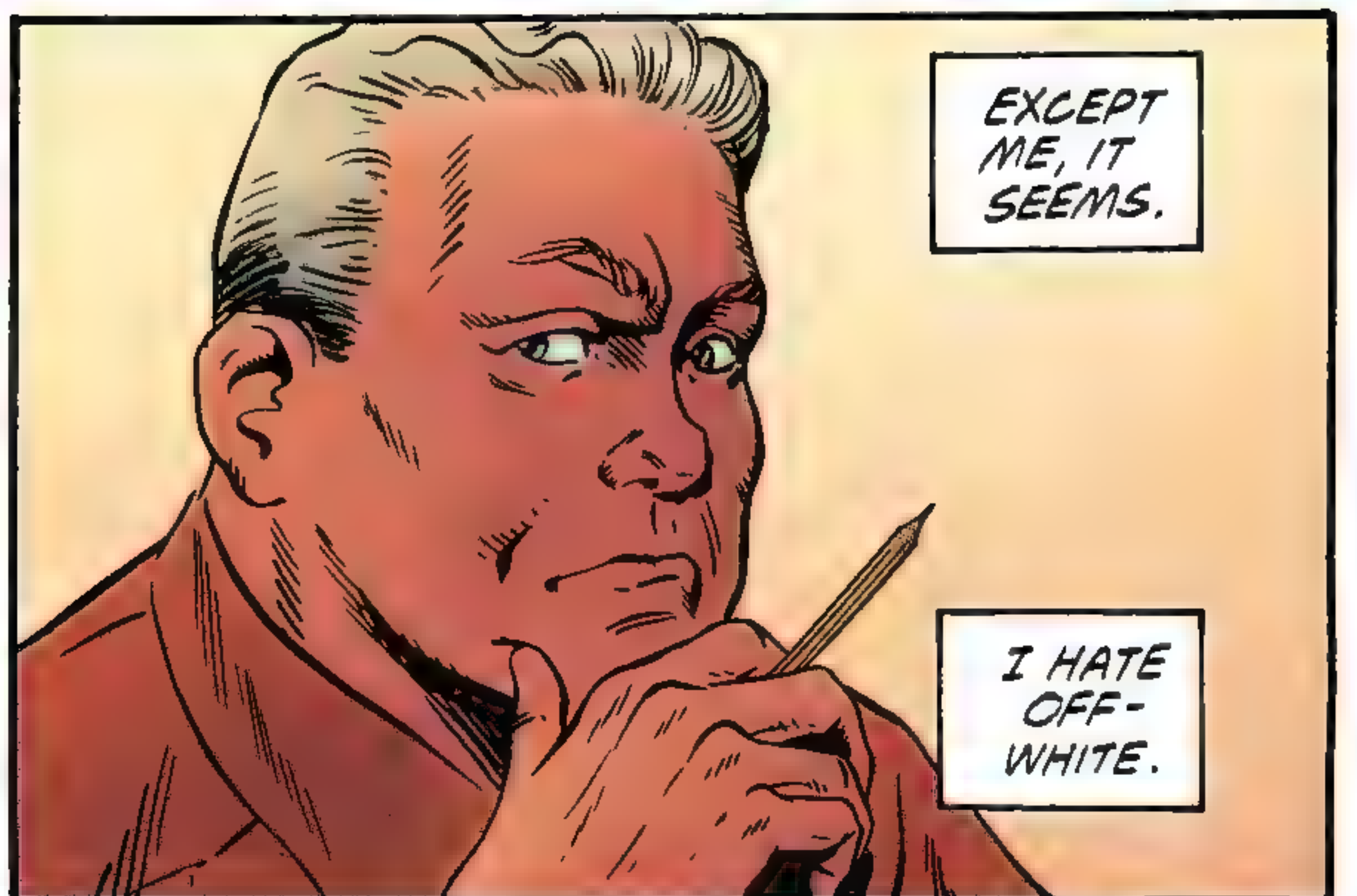
JOHNNY, YOU WERE NEVER A HERO.

YOU WERE ALWAYS JUST A WEIRD GUY WE PUT UP WITH 'CAUSE YA HAD A "PET" THUNDERBOLT.

I SHOULD REJECT YA.



BUT A NEW DECADE'S STARTING... AND IN SUCH A TIME, I GUESS EVERYONE DESERVES A SECOND CHANCE.



EXCEPT ME, IT SEEMS.

I HATE OFF-WHITE.

POLITICIANS
PROMISE MUCH
AS THEY GRAB
THEIR WAY TO
THE TOP.

THOMPSON PROMISED
AMERICA THE IMPOSSIBLE...

"HE CAN
FLY!"

...AND HE
DELIVERED.

"HE HAS THE
STRENGTH OF
A THOUSAND
MEN!"

"INVULNERABILITY!"

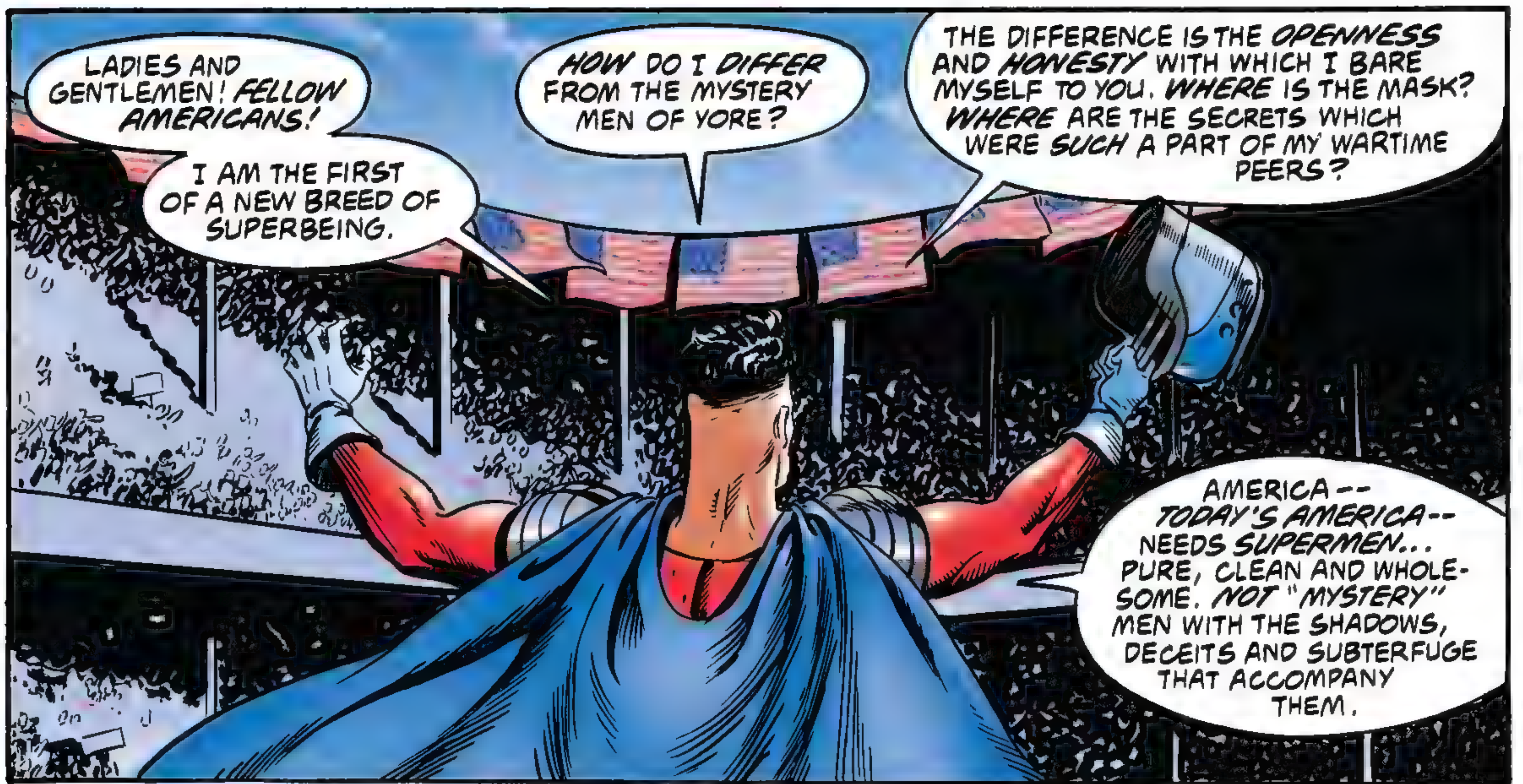
"AND IF HE WANTS...
HIS FISTS HAVE
THE PERCUSSIVE
FORCE OF A BOMB!"

"HE IS THE CHAMPION OF
THE NEW AGE... THE
ATOMIC DAWN... THE
FUTURE ACCORDING TO
TEX THOMPSON..."

"HE IS
DYNAMAN!"

"DANIEL DUNBAR... THE YOUNG
MAN WITH THE GLINT OF SUN IN
HIS EYES AND IN HIS SMILE. THE
AMAZING BEING WHO SPRANG
FROM THE ASHES OF AN ATOMIC
TEST... AND INTO **AMERICA'S**
HEARTS!"





LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! FELLOW AMERICANS!

I AM THE FIRST OF A NEW BREED OF SUPERBEING.

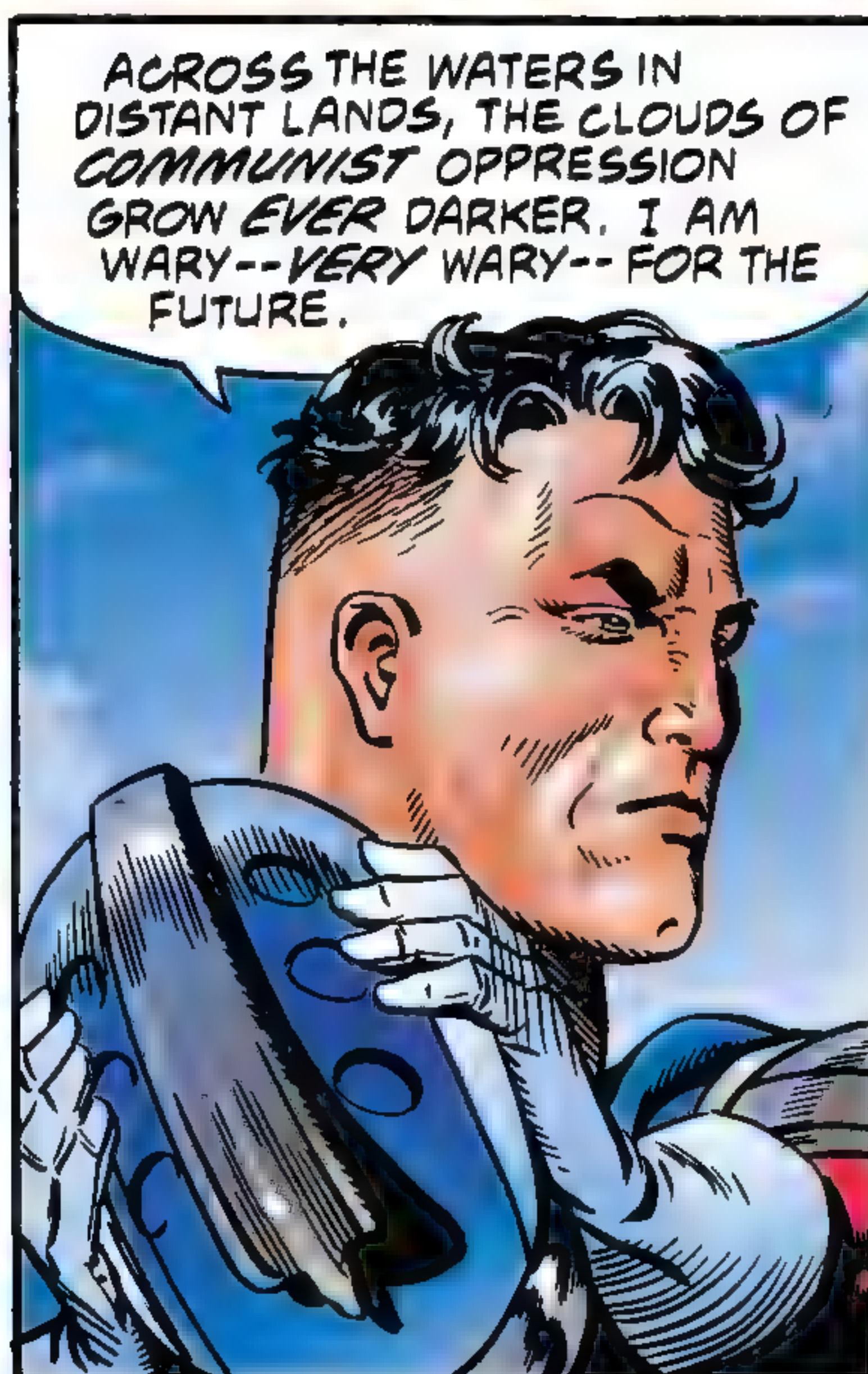
HOW DO I DIFFER FROM THE MYSTERY MEN OF YORE?

THE DIFFERENCE IS THE OPENNESS AND HONESTY WITH WHICH I BARE MYSELF TO YOU. WHERE IS THE MASK? WHERE ARE THE SECRETS WHICH WERE SUCH A PART OF MY WARTIME PEERS?

AMERICA -- TODAY'S AMERICA -- NEEDS SUPERMEN... PURE, CLEAN AND WHOLE-SOME. NOT "MYSTERY" MEN WITH THE SHADOWS, DECEITS AND SUBTERFUGE THAT ACCOMPANY THEM.



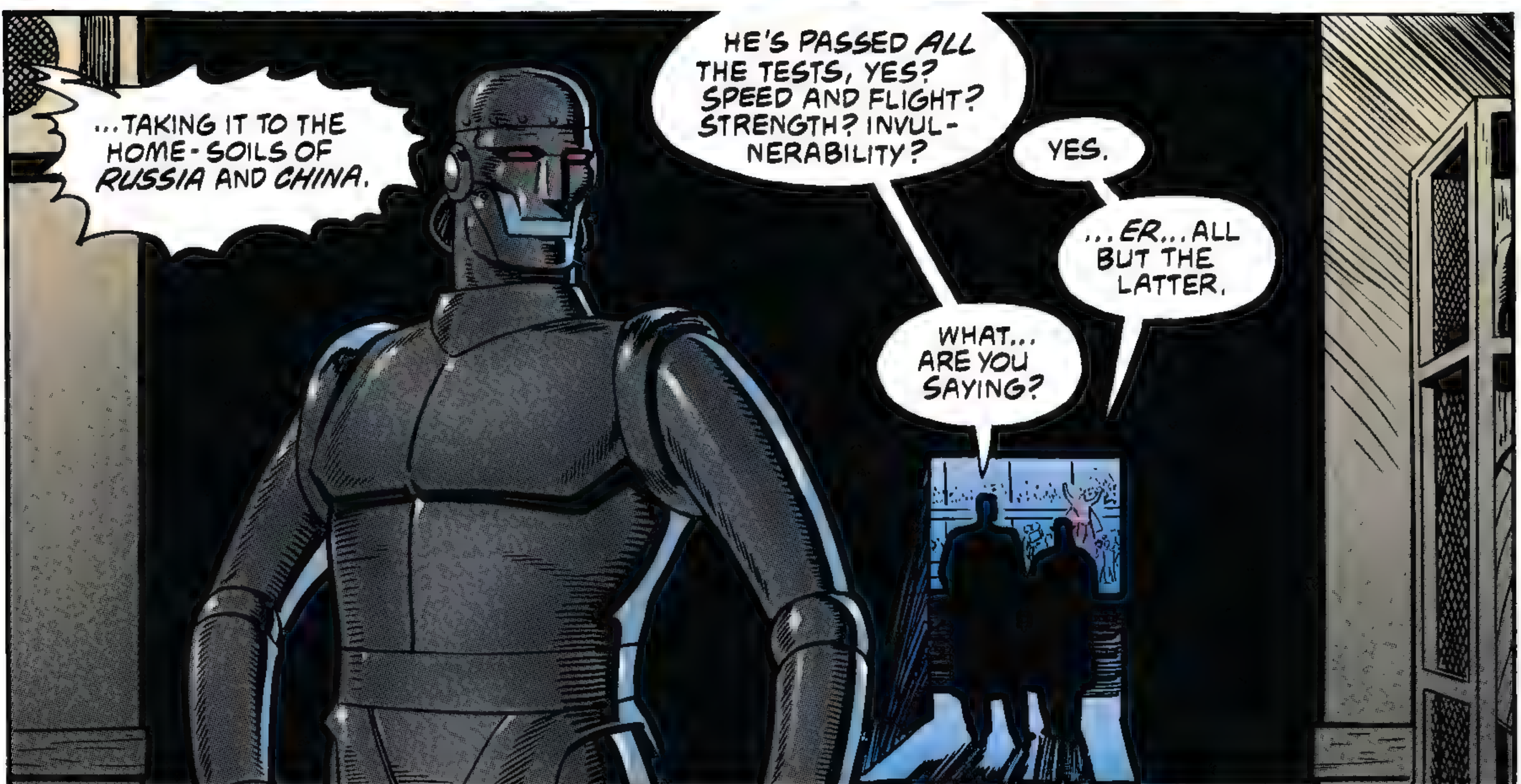
AND I WISH THAT DECEIT AND SUBTERFUGE WERE THINGS PAST IN THE REST OF THE WORLD.



ACROSS THE WATERS IN DISTANT LANDS, THE CLOUDS OF COMMUNIST OPPRESSION GROW EVER DARKER. I AM WARY--VERY WARY--FOR THE FUTURE.



BUT UNAFRAID. I AM STRONG AND WILLING TO FIGHT TO PRESERVE HONEST, CHERISHED, AMERICAN VALUES... EVEN IF IT MEANS MEETING THIS THREAT HEAD ON...



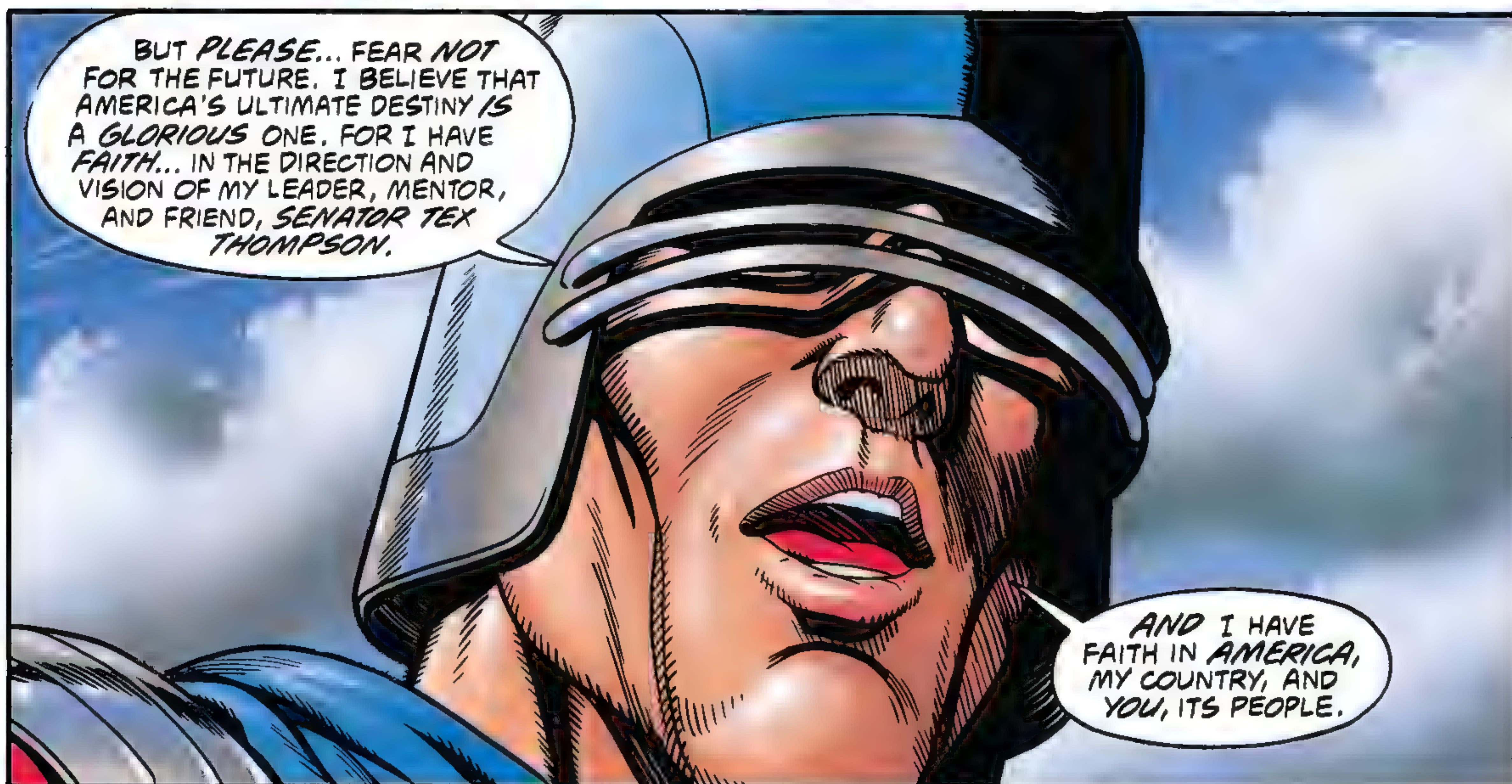
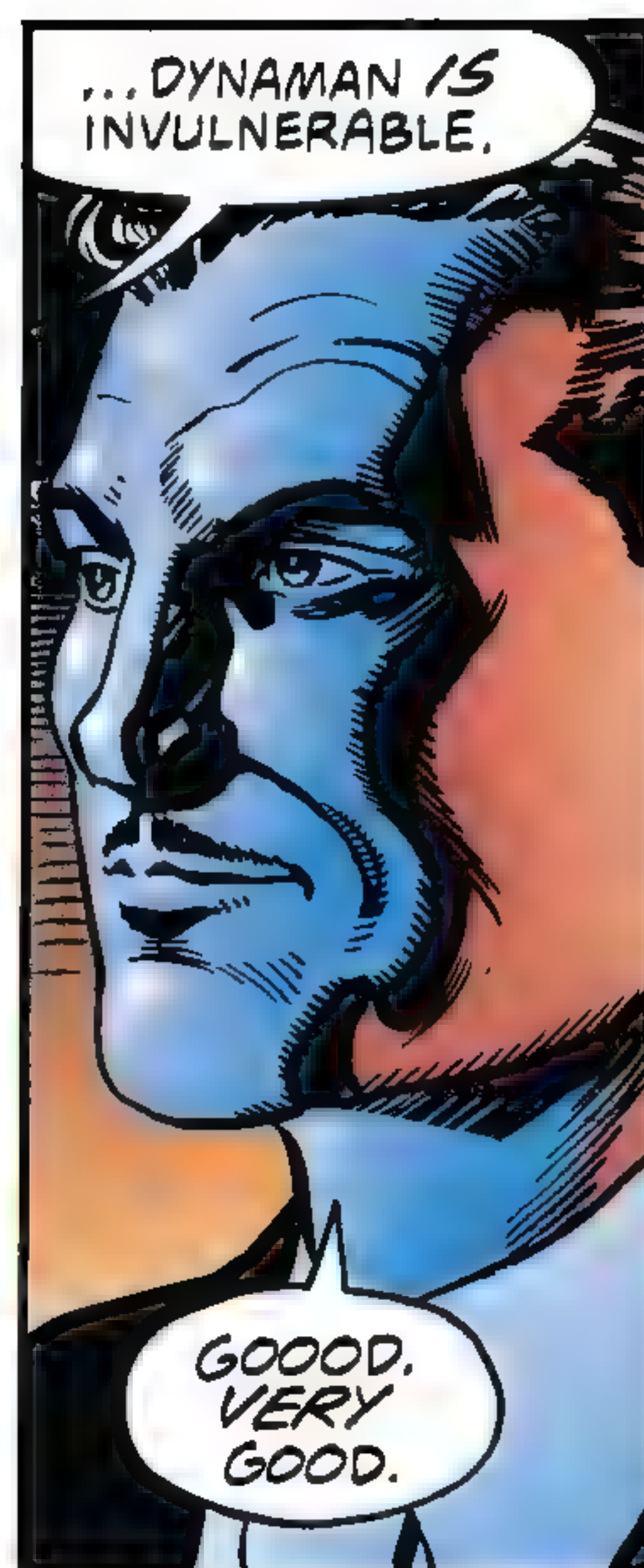
...TAKING IT TO THE HOME-SOILS OF RUSSIA AND CHINA.

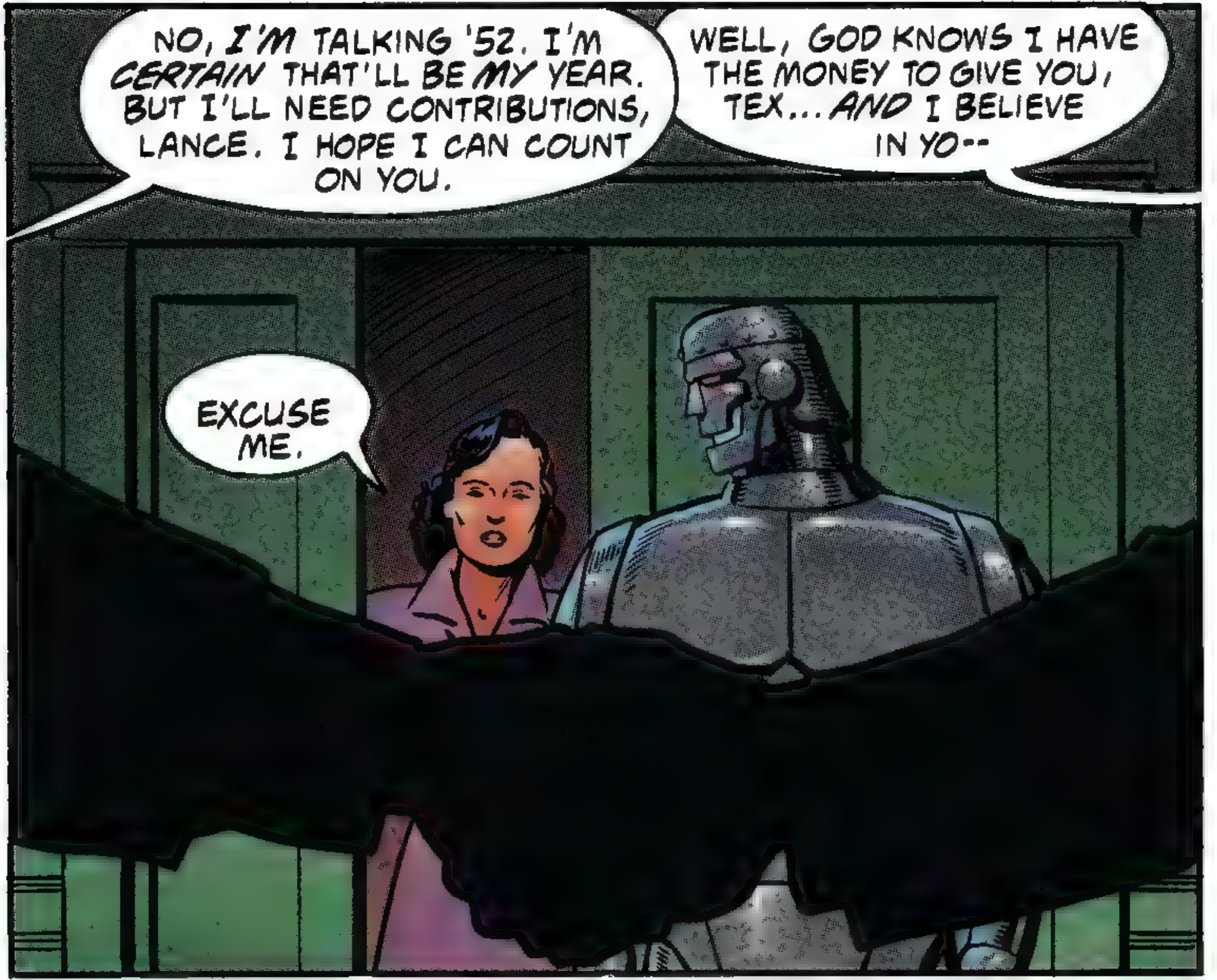
HE'S PASSED ALL THE TESTS, YES? SPEED AND FLIGHT? STRENGTH? INVULNERABILITY?

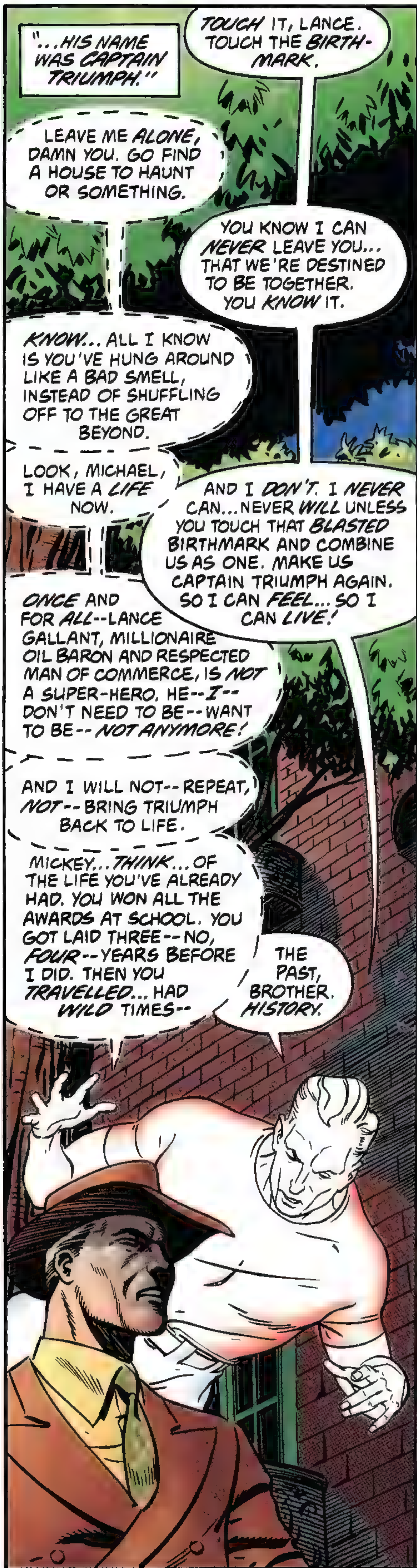
YES.

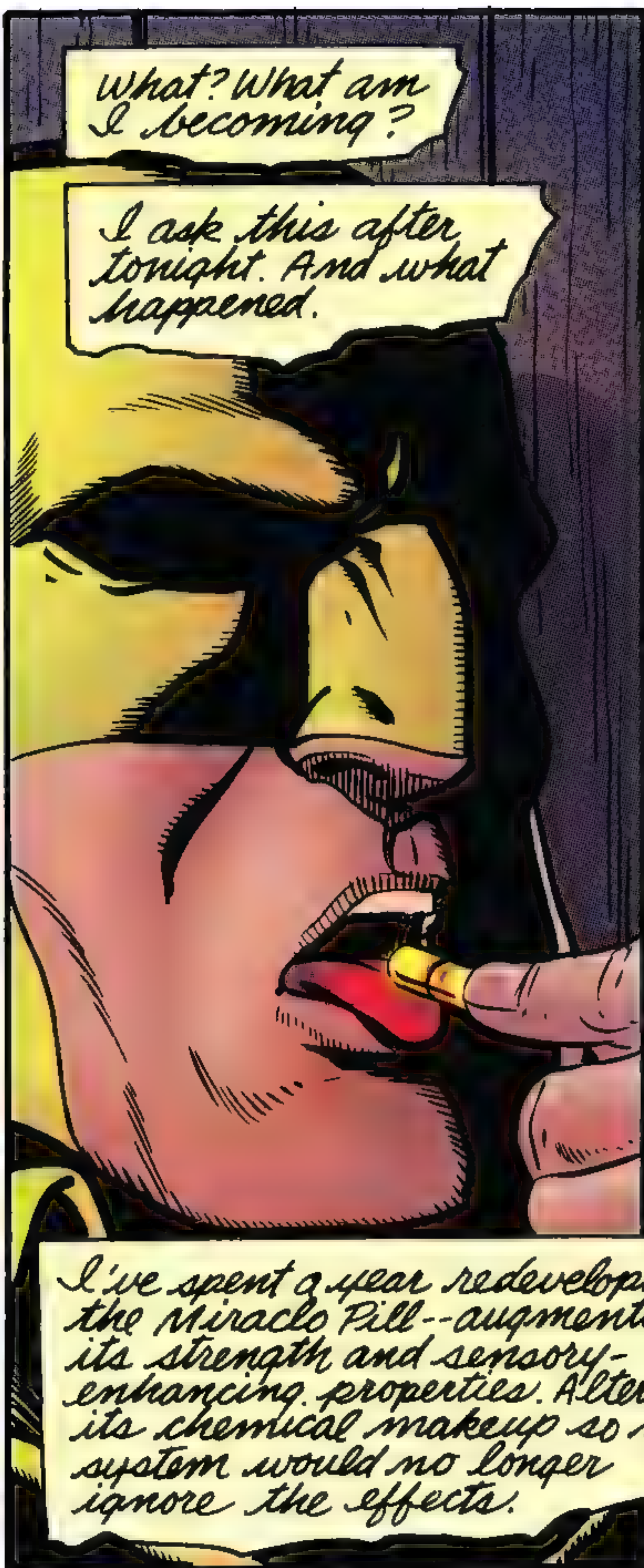
...ER... ALL BUT THE LATTER.

WHAT... ARE YOU SAYING?









What? What am I becoming?

I ask this after tonight. And what happened.

I've spent a year redeveloping the Miracle Pill--augmenting its strength and sensory-enhancing properties. Altering its chemical makeup so my system would no longer ignore the effects.



A year in the lab--hating every second.

But this evening at least, I was where I wanted to be--doing what I craved.

PLEASE... I HAVE MONEY.

IT'S YOURS. DON'T... HURT... PLEASE.

I had the street. I had the night. I had an hour.



Did I have the power?

RELAX.

ENJOY.



That... was what I was going to discover.

PREPARE...



...FOR PAIN...



I'd tested and retested the pill countless times before this evening.



For strength levels... and how fluctuations in my body chemistry might alter the pill's effects.



Epinephrine rushes were tested for and countered against.



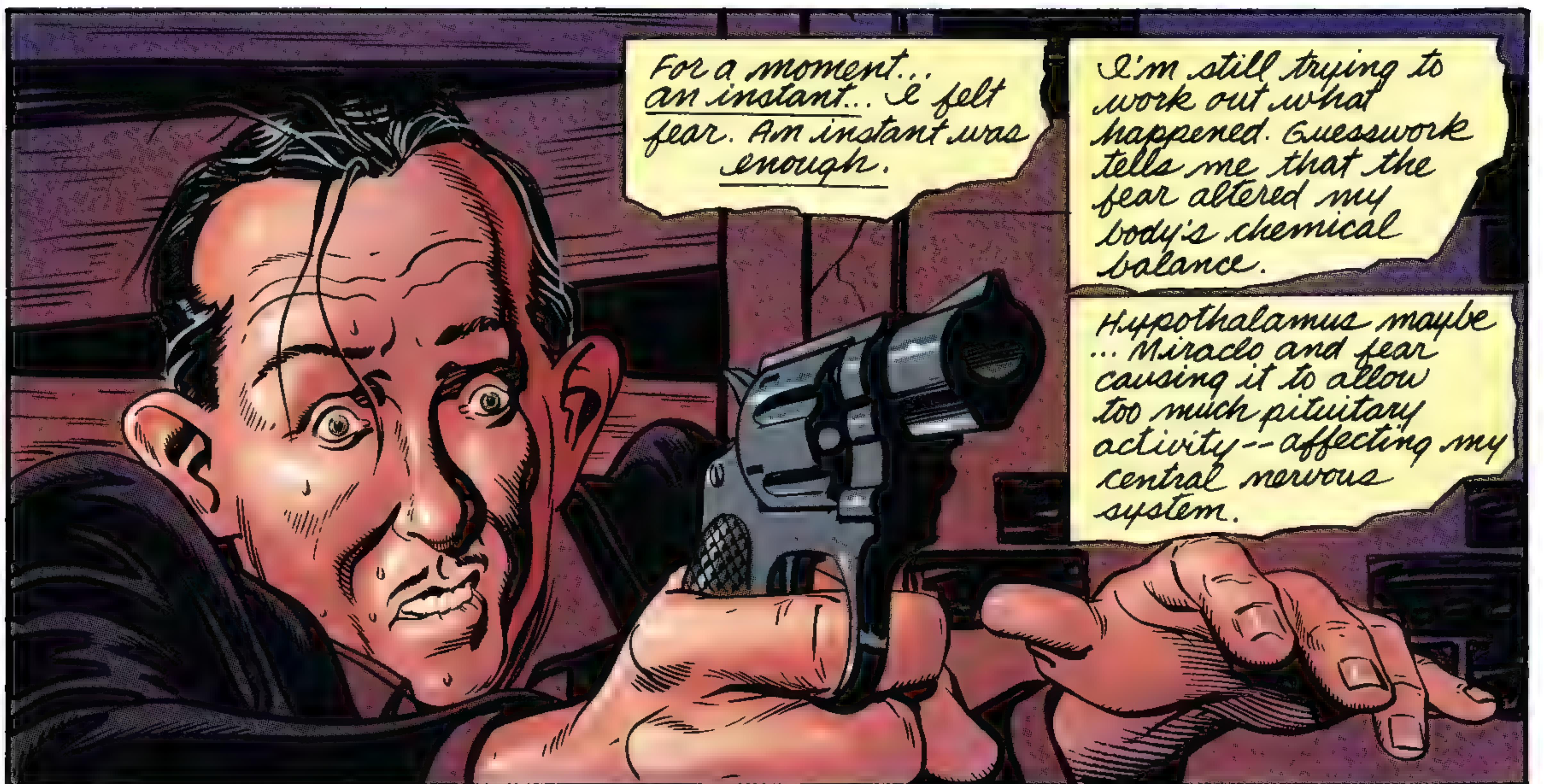
I'd prepared for everything...



...or so I thought.

And to be honest, at the time I was enjoying myself too much to care...

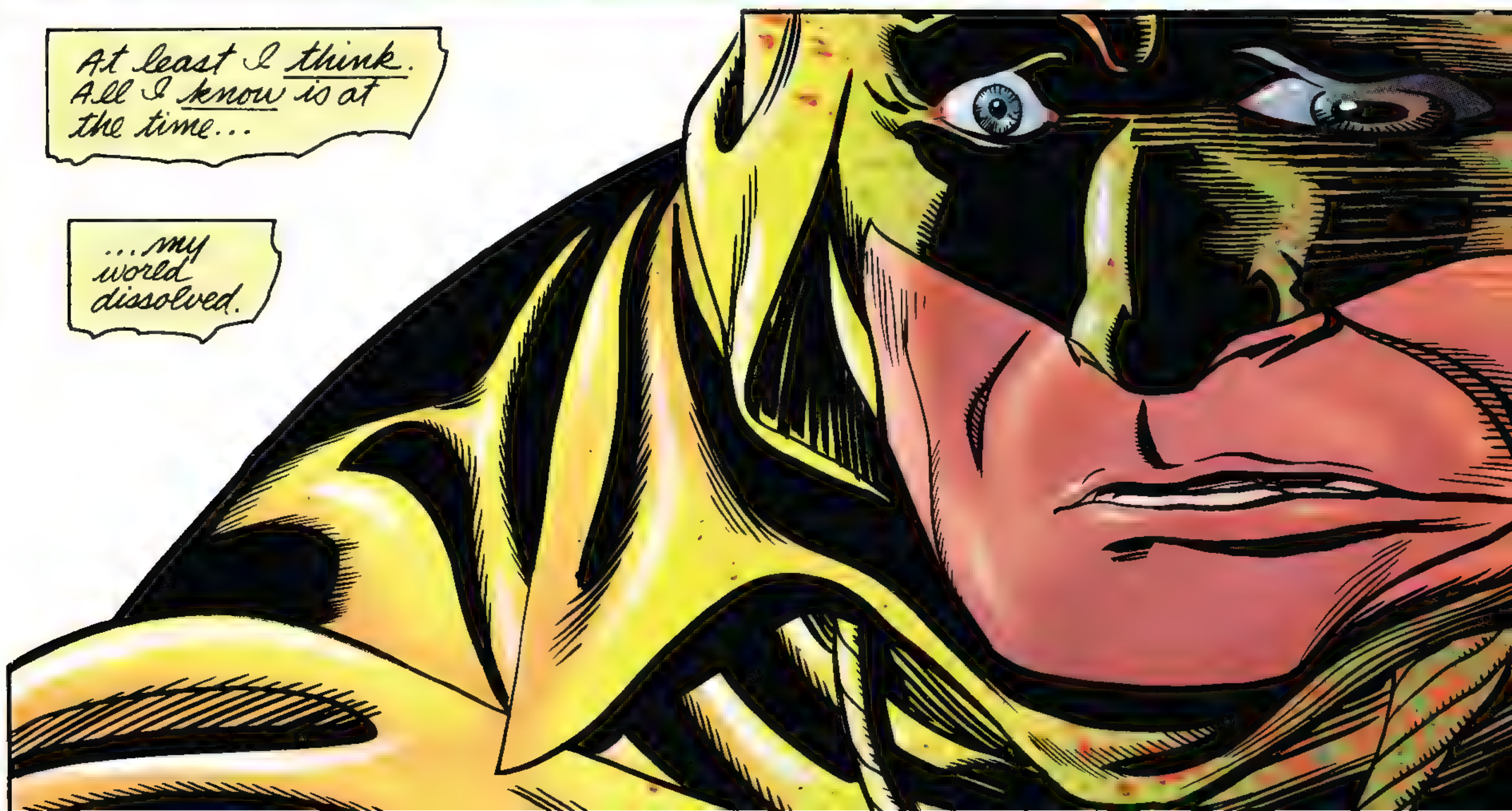
...up to the point when the thug pulled a gun.



For a moment... an instant... I felt fear. An instant was enough.

I'm still trying to work out what happened. Guesswork tells me that the fear altered my body's chemical balance.

Hypothalamus maybe... Miracle and fear causing it to allow too much pituitary activity--affecting my central nervous system.



At least I think. All I know is at the time...

...my world dissolved.

The violence became distilled
with a languid after-image--
every movement precious--
an artwork

The punk was as scared
as I was. Lucky-- he
fired... and missed. With
the flash of the gun
blast frozen in its beauty.

My lower back was
treacle-soft

Colors bright--distracting--
dazzling.

The grain of the
brickwork was
beautiful.

Weeds in the corner of the alley,
caught my eye. Bright-bold
nature amidst the granite. I
heard the weeds sing-- saw
them stretch.

My brain the
projector, wasn't
working.

The speed control was
broken. We moved--
I punched... in slow
motion

Body was like mercury.
Had to concentrate--
or I'd melt.

Kept fighting--
despite the
spectrum flicker-
flashes.

I won-- though
I don't know how.

And as expected, my powers
left me after an hour... the
side-effects lasted for eight.

A year developing the Miracle
Pill. A year wasted... with
my company, neglected and
my life a joke.

Why doesn't it stop me?
Why do I know I'll
spend another year...
another decade, if I
have to... getting Miracle
perfected.

What am I
becoming?

The question's
rhetorical. I
know the
answer.

It's not the
pills' addictive
effects... there
are none... not
anymore. No...
it's the very
role I play...
Hourman. The
rush of it.

I know what
I am. It
scares me
but I know.

I'm an
addict.



THE CHAMPAGNE IS FLAT, AND NOT THE VINTAGE PROMISED. THE HORS D'OEUVRES ARE SLIGHTLY STALE.

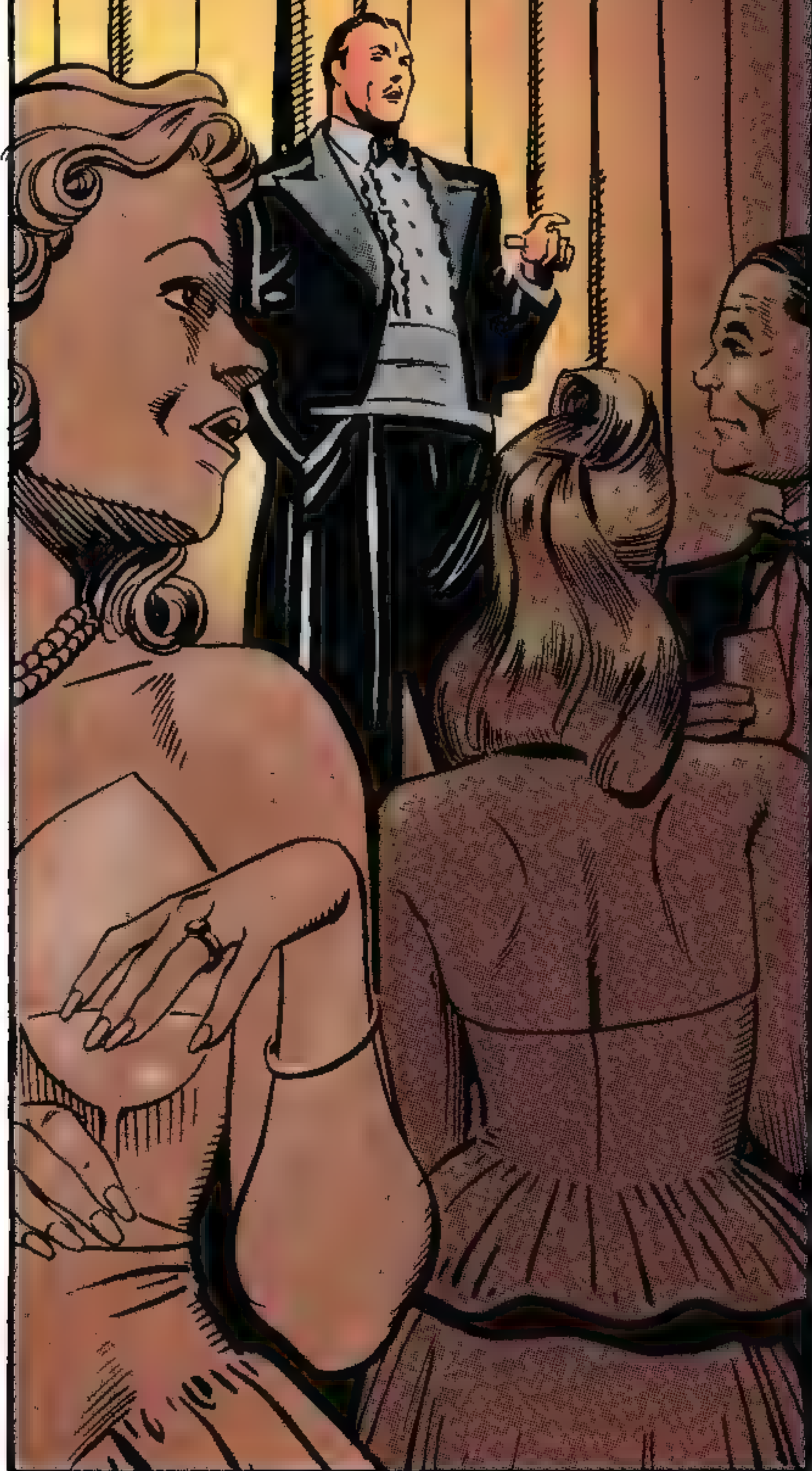
THOMPSON INTENDS TO COMPLAIN TO THE CATERERS AT A LATER DATE.

TONIGHT, HOWEVER, IT DOESN'T MATTER TO HIM. WHAT MATTERS ARE HIS WORDS... HIS GESTURES... THE SHEER PRESENCE WITH WHICH HE TRANS-FIXES THE GATHERING.

IT'S WARM FOR AUTUMN, 1948. AND TEX THOMPSON IS UNSTOPPABLE.

PEOPLE SAID I WAS CRAZY... AT LEAST THOSE LESS FAR-SIGHTED AND IN TUNE WITH THE TIMES.

AND YES, I AM REFERRING TO THOSE OLDER, GREYER, STUFFIER VOICES WITHIN THE SENATE.



I BELIEVE IN REDEMPTION.

I BELIEVE IF YOU GIVE SOMEONE THE INCENTIVE TO ATONE, THEY'LL JUMP AT THE OPPORTUNITY.

IF THAT BELIEF MEANS I'M CRAZY, THEN YES, I'M A LUNATIC.



AS YOU'RE ALL AWARE, I'VE OFFERED ANY SUPER-VILLAINS WHOSE CRIMES FALL SHORT OF MURDER AN AMNESTY IN RETURN FOR THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO MY FORCES... AND TO THE AMERICAN FLAG.

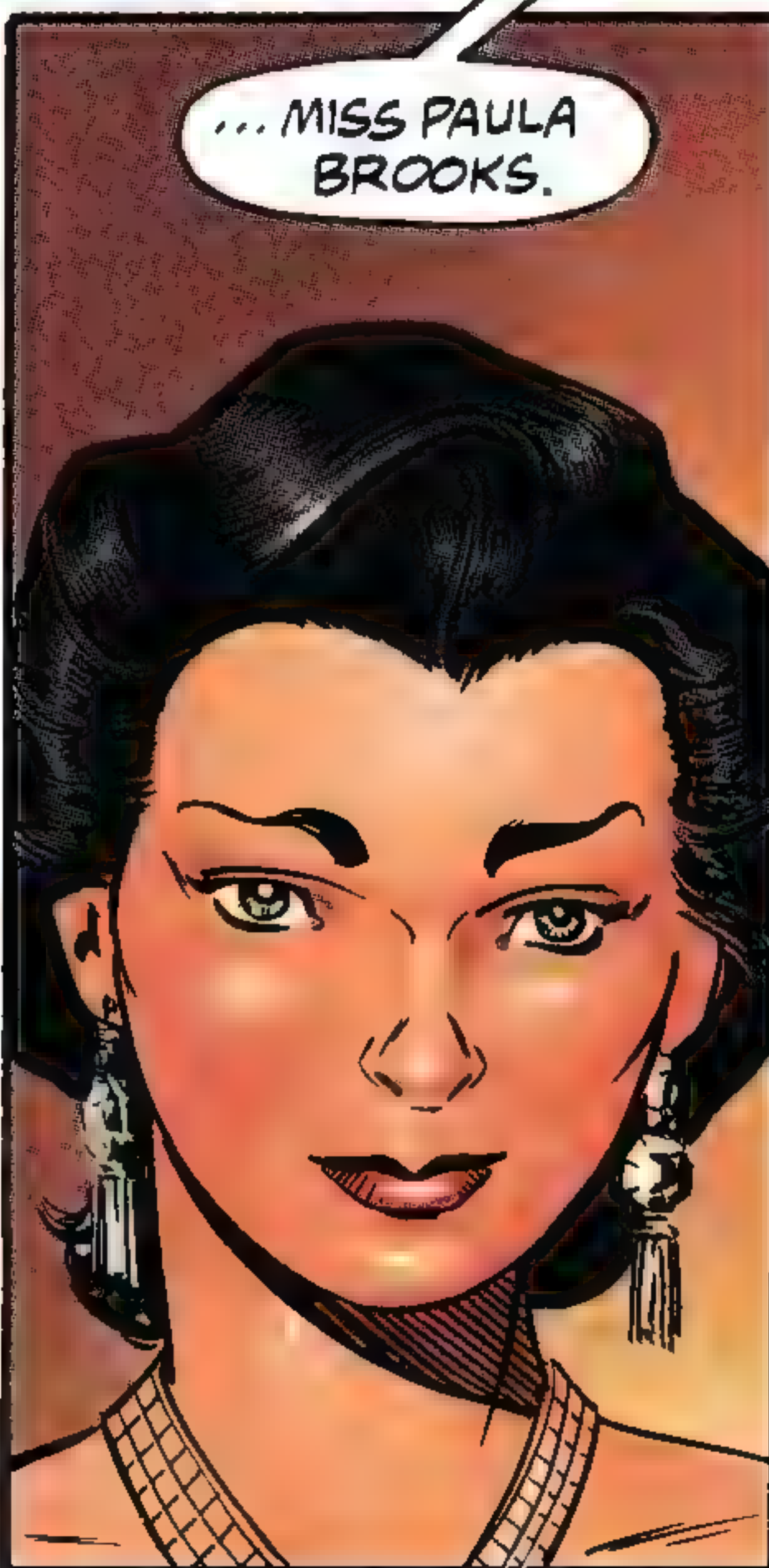
TONIGHT I PRESENT THE FIRST SUCH REDEMPTION... A JEWEL THIEF AND SCOURGE OF AMERICA'S POLICE FOR MANY YEARS.

NO MORE, HOWEVER, NO LONGER!



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I PRESENT THE TIGRESS...

... MISS PAULA BROOKS.



GALLANT'S LIPS ARE MOIST, YET HIS THROAT'S DRY. HIS HEARTBEAT'S A SNARE-ROLL.

SHE'S...





"...THE ONE."

"MUST GET..."

... AN INTRODUCTION,
TEX. HOW ABOUT IT?

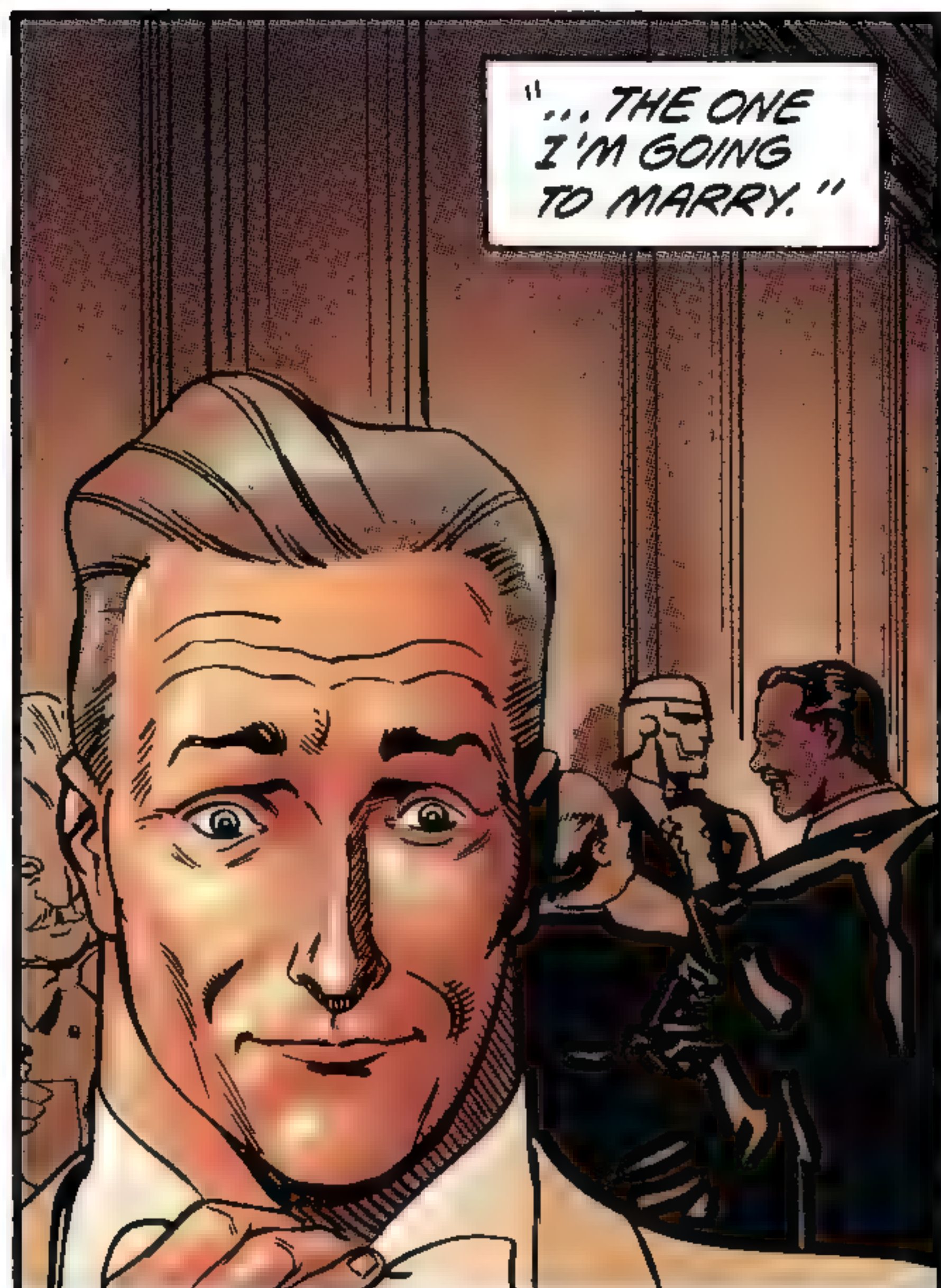
HA! OF
COURSE. YOU
NEED BUT
ASK.



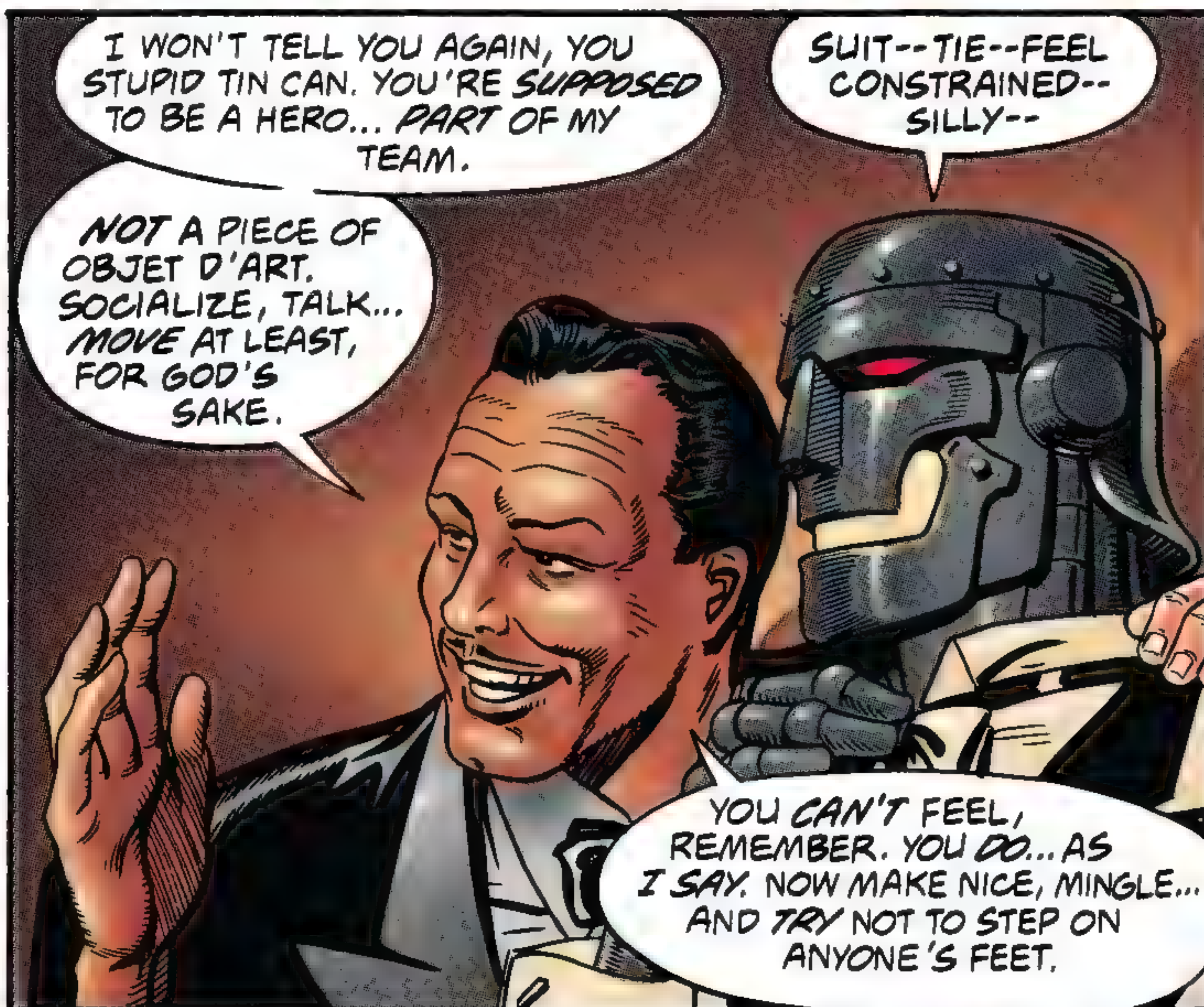
PAULA, THIS IS LANCE
GALLANT. IT'S HIS
MONEY THAT PAID FOR
TONIGHT'S SOIRÉE.

WELL, MR.
GALLANT, I HOPE
YOU FEEL I WAS
WORTH IT.

PLEASE,
CALL ME
LANCE.



"... THE ONE
I'M GOING
TO MARRY."



I WON'T TELL YOU AGAIN, YOU
STUPID TIN CAN. YOU'RE SUPPOSED
TO BE A HERO... PART OF MY
TEAM.

SUIT--TIE--FEEL
CONSTRAINED--
SILLY--

NOT A PIECE OF
OBJET D'ART.
SOCIALIZE, TALK...
MOVE AT LEAST,
FOR GOD'S
SAKE.

YOU CAN'T FEEL,
REMEMBER. YOU DO... AS
I SAY. NOW MAKE NICE, MINGLE...
AND TRY NOT TO STEP ON
ANYONE'S FEET.



IT SEEMS I'M MAKING A HABIT
OF DISTURBING YOUR CONVER-
SATIONS, MR. GALLANT.

I'M SORRY... BUT WE
NEED PAULA
FOR SOME
PHOTOS.

OH...WELL,
I GUESS I'LL
SEE YOU
AROUND,
LANCE.

I HOPE
SO, MISS
BROOKS.



HEY... CALL
ME PAULA.

KINDA CUTE,
KINDA DULL,
SHE THINKS.

GOOD FOR A
WEEKEND IN
PALM SPRINGS,
MAYBE. NOTHING
MORE.

THE HUNTERS
GATHER.

ONE HUNTER'S STOMACH
GROWLS FROM TOO LITTLE
FOOD AND TOO MUCH
COFFEE. ANOTHER HATES
THE CHILL BOSTON WINTER
AND WISHES THEY'D
FOUND THEIR TARGET BY
SUMMER.

IT'S BEEN A YEAR FOR THEM...
AND TWENTY TEAMS LIKE THEM.
A YEAR OF SEARCHING, STATE
BY MISERABLE STATE.

BUT THANKFULLY, NOW... THEIR PREY'S
LOCATED... AND IN SIGHT. THE TRIO
ARE ALREADY SPENDING THE
BOUNTY IN THEIR HEADS.

THERE
HE IS.

SO WHAT ARE
WE WAITING
FOR? LET'S GET
HIM, AND GET
OUT OF HERE.

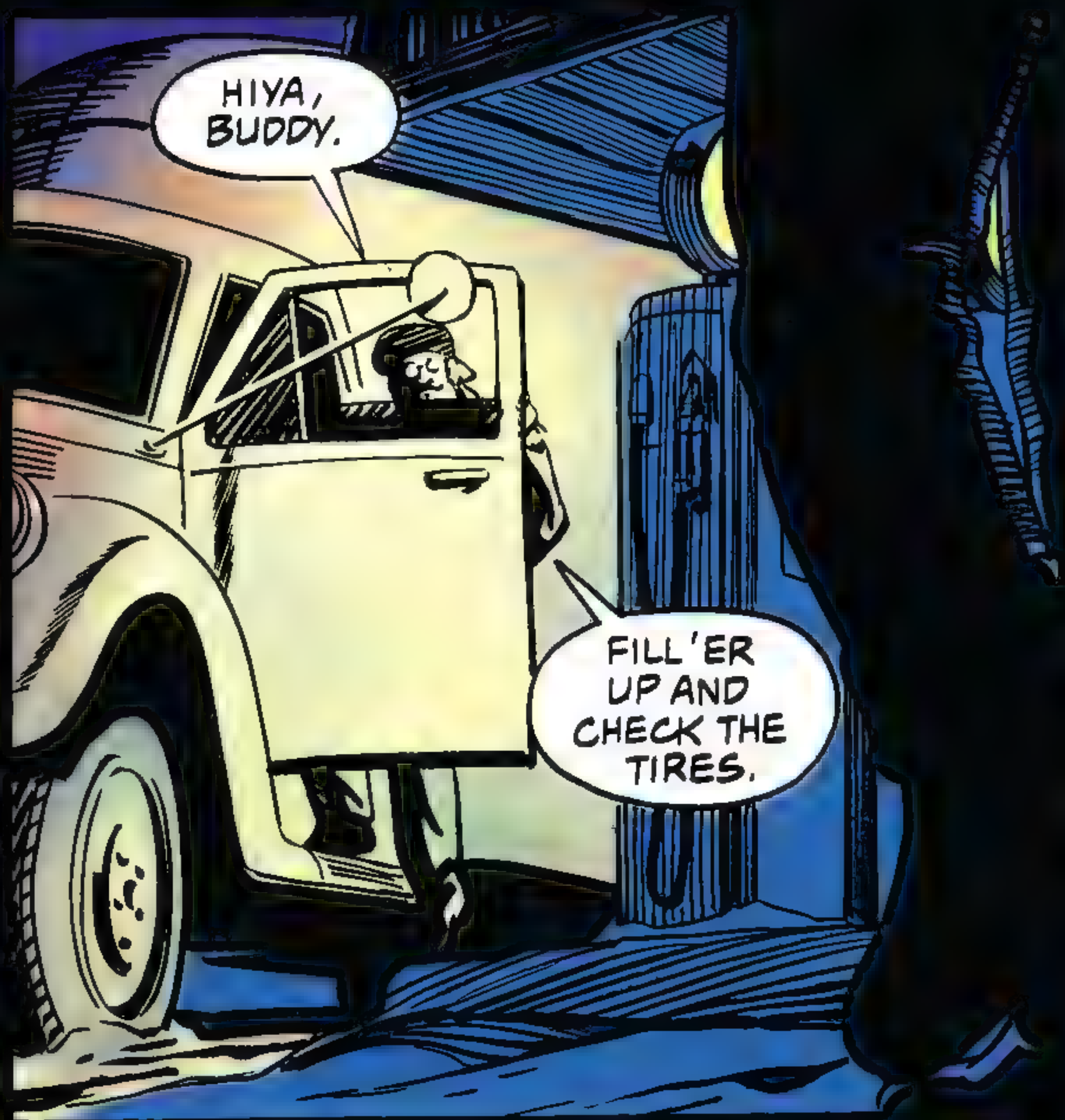
WAIT A
MOMENT.

WAIT NOTHIN'... CAN'T
FEEL MY NUTS, IT'S
SO COLD.

I'LL START UP
THE MOTOR.

WAIT, I SAID.
SOMEONE'S
COMING.





HIYA,
BUDDY.

FILL 'ER
UP AND
CHECK THE
TIRES.



RECOGNITION
ISN'T
IMMEDIATE.

FOR BOB DALEY, IT
TAKES A MINUTE...
MAYBE TWO.



KIRK?... PAUL
KIRK?



you won't be snared.

you won't
be caught.

WAIT... WHAT'RE YOU
DOING? I'M DALEY...
BOB DALEY.

YOU KNOW ME.
YOU KNOW ME...

...REMEMBER?





YES, I DID KNOW YOU,
DIDN'T I? I THINK
I *ALMOST* RECALL...

HOW DID YOU GET
LIKE THIS? WHAT
HAPPENED IN YOUR
PAST?

MY *PAST*... DIED
IN GERMANY. OR AT
LEAST I ASSUME
SO, I CAN'T REMEM-
BER. I ONLY KNOW
THAT WAS WHERE
I RETURNED FROM
IN '46.



I'M *HUNTED*. I
KNEW IT... EVERY ESSENCE
OF BEING *CRIED OUT*,
TELLING ME THIS.

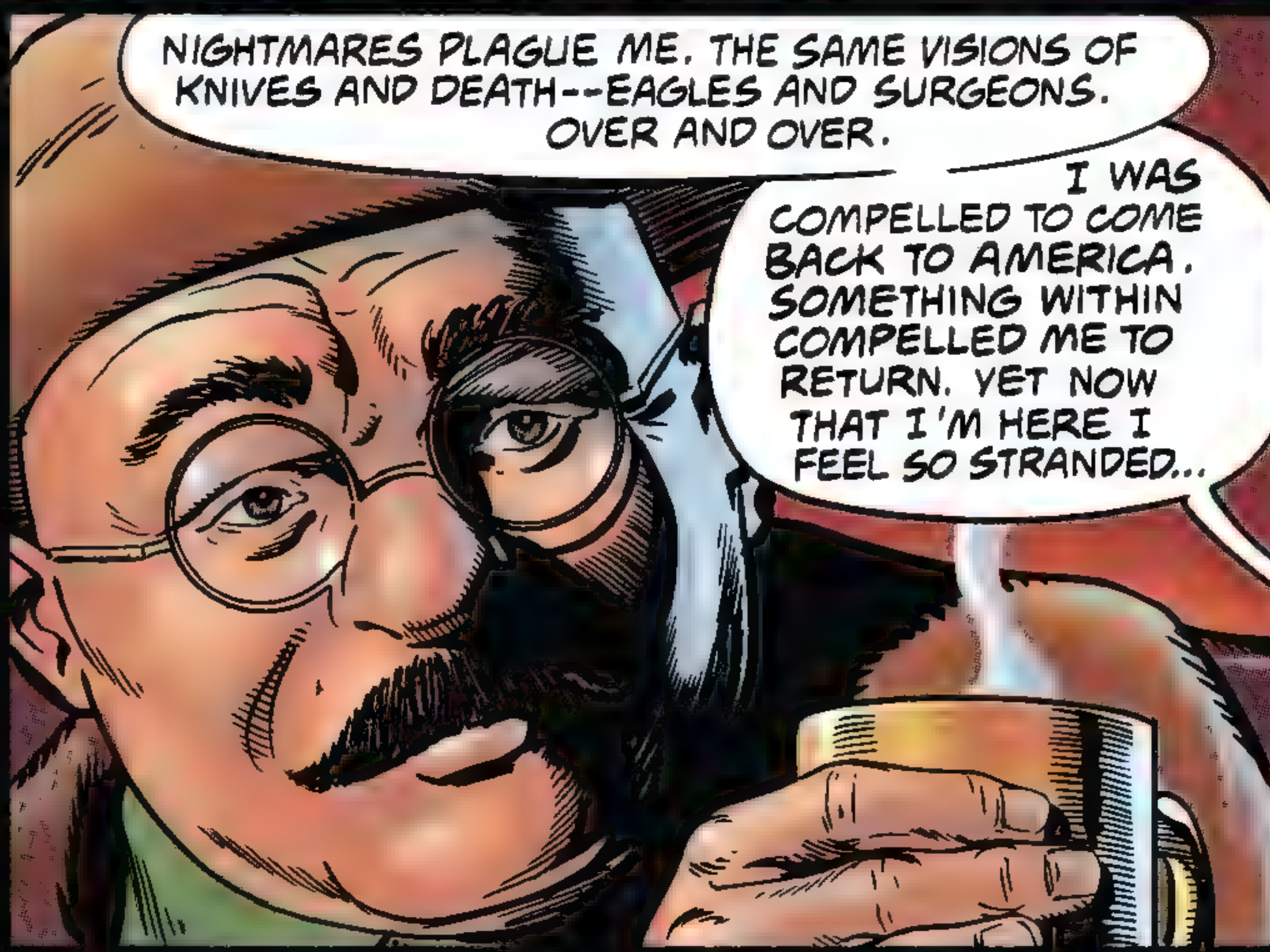
THEN MEN WITH
GUNS CAME, PROVING
MY FEARS. I DON'T KNOW
WHO THEY WERE... *WHO*
THEY WORKED FOR... *WHY*
THEY WANTED ME.

SO I RUN SCARED...
HIDE OUT. *EVEN BEFORE*
I ENCOUNTERED THE
GUNMEN, I WAS AFRAID...
BUT *NOW*...

MY AMNESIA... NEEDS
THERAPY. I NEED HELP TO
BECOME NORMAL AGAIN...
TO REMEMBER WHATEVER
MESS I'M IN. BUT I'M
TOO AFRAID TO ASK FOR
IT... TO GO TO ANYONE.



EVEN SEEING YOU... SOME
ASPECT OF YOU CAUSES
ME ANXIETY. *WHY* SHOULD
I FEEL SUCH FEAR OF
YOU?... OF *EVERYONE*?



NIGHTMARES PLAGUE ME. THE SAME VISIONS OF
KNIVES AND DEATH--EAGLES AND SURGEONS.
OVER AND OVER.

I WAS
COMPELLED TO COME
BACK TO AMERICA.
SOMETHING WITHIN
COMPELLED ME TO
RETURN. YET NOW
THAT I'M HERE I
FEEL SO STRANDED...



...LOST.



KIRK... PAUL... IT'S FATE WE MET. YOU NEED SOMEONE TO HELP YOU... SOMEONE TO TRUST.

HERE I AM, PAUL. TRUST ME.

COME ON. WE'RE LEAVING.



GOOD COFFEE.

SORRY ABOUT YOUR HIRED HELP, THOUGH.

THANKS.

WHAT?

HE'S COMING WITH ME.



WAIT! YOU CAN'T JUST WALK LIKE THIS.

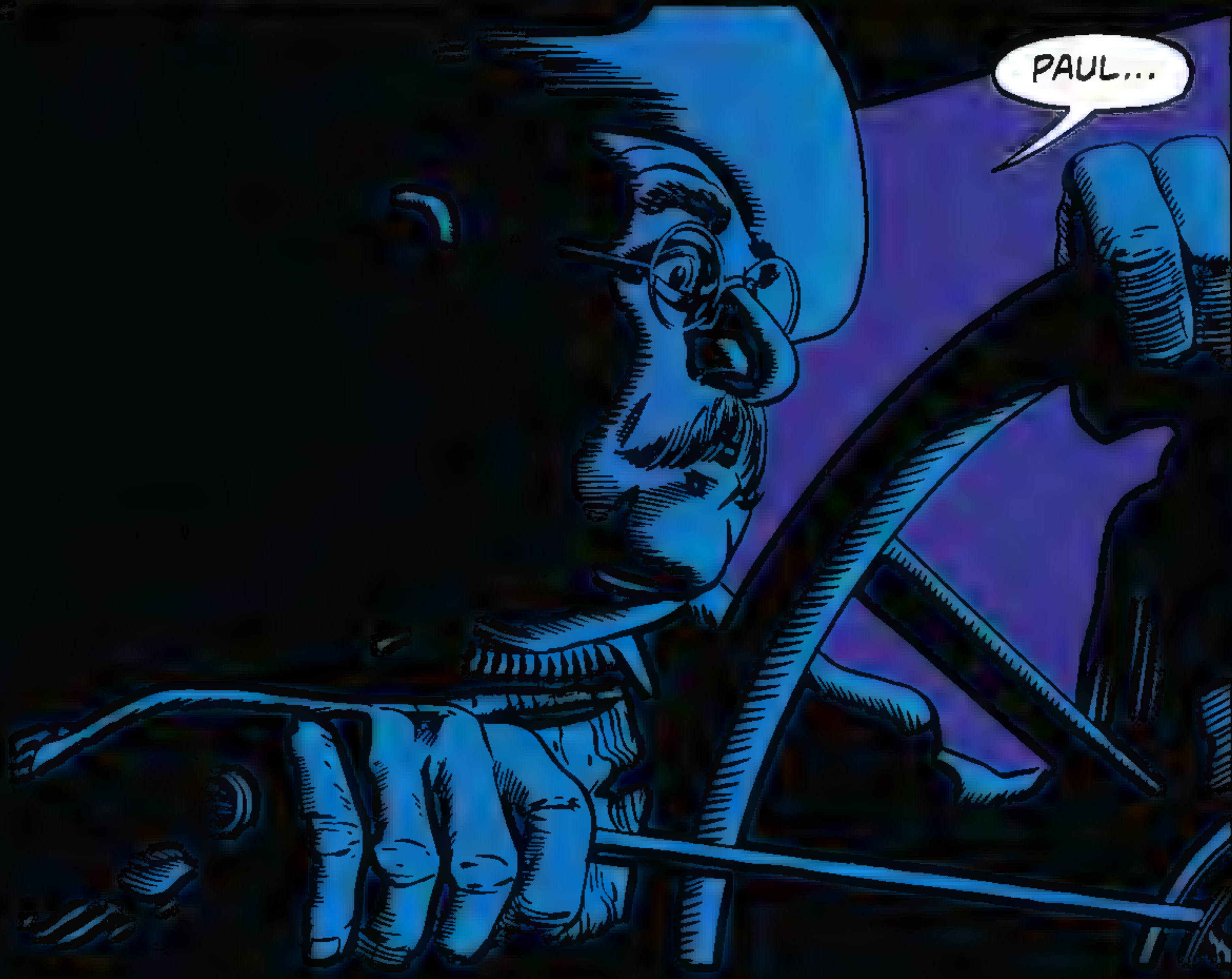
SORRY, FAY, BUT I HAVE TO. GOTTA MOVE ON.

LET'S GO.



EVERYTHING'LL BE FINE, PAUL. JUST YOU WAIT.







and then
it starts...

...the gunshots
sound...

...echoing and
reechoing through
your skull.

immediately,
you're petrified.



petrified.

PAUL...TELL ME WHAT
TO DO! OR DO SOMETHING
YOURSELF! PLEASE!
THEY'RE GAINING!

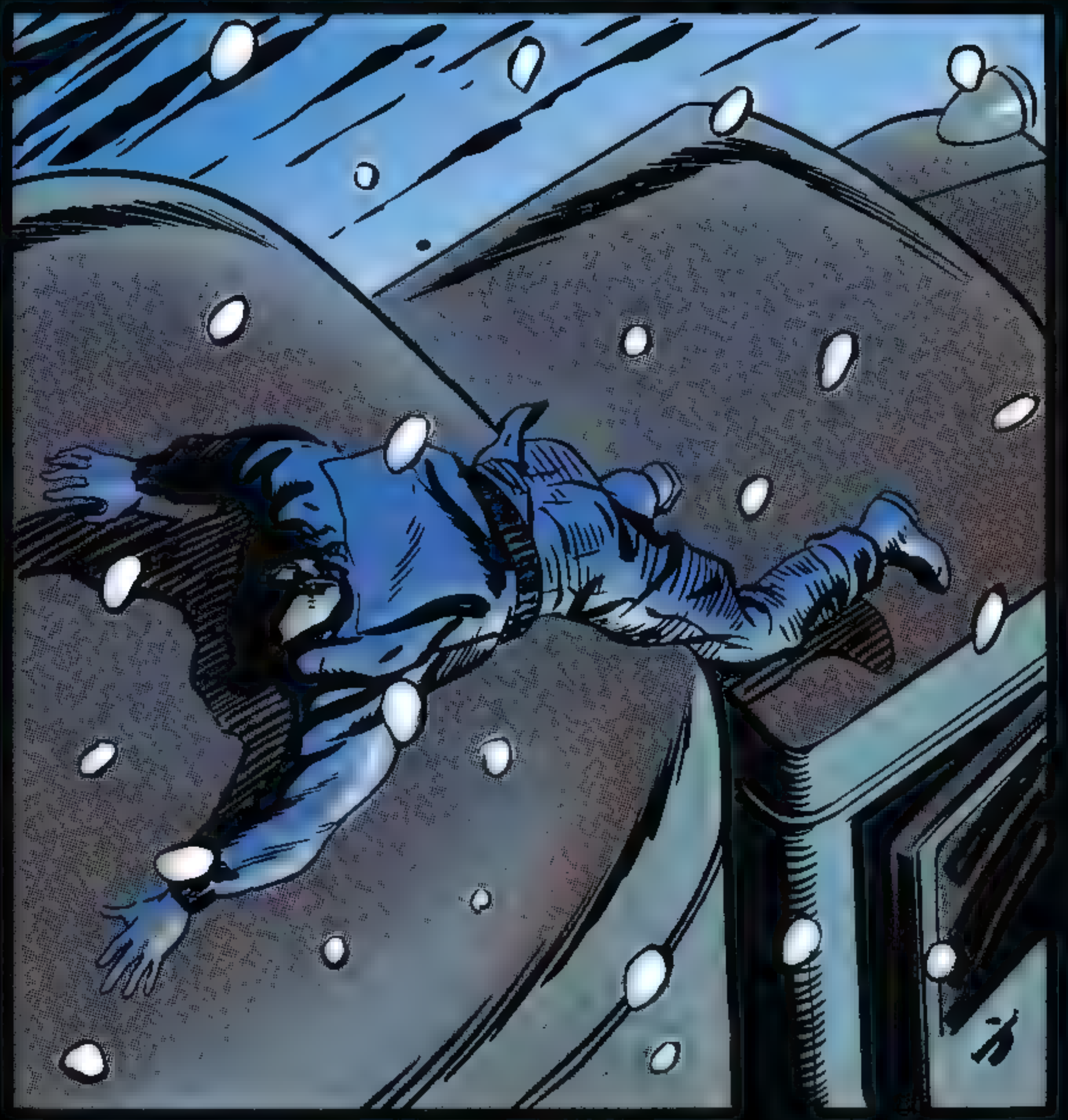


you're as scared as
Daley--your whole
body's shaking.

but you pretend to
yourself--you pretend
you remember--



--that you're
a hero.





WHAT
IS HE
DOING?!



I DON'T
BELIEVE IT!

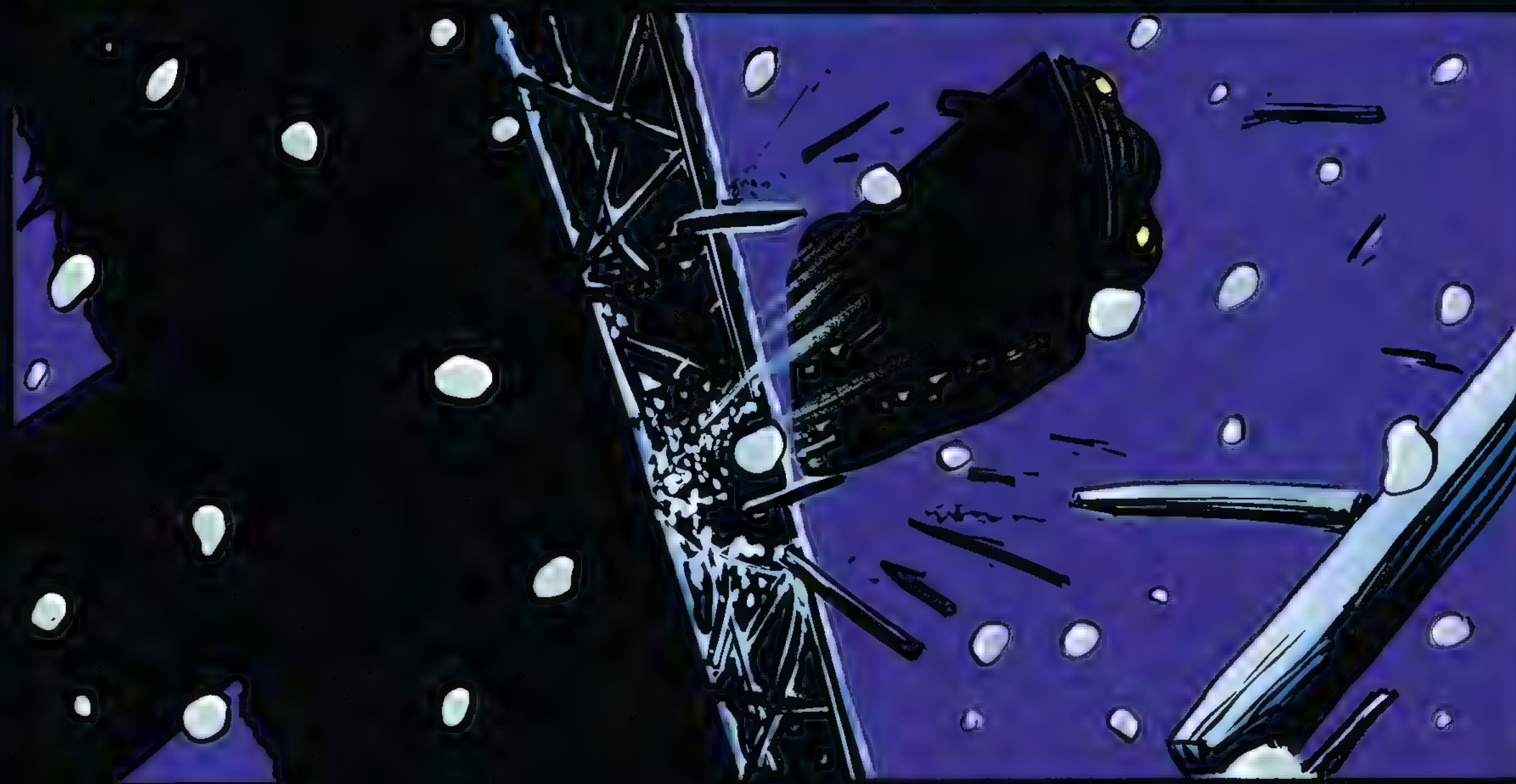
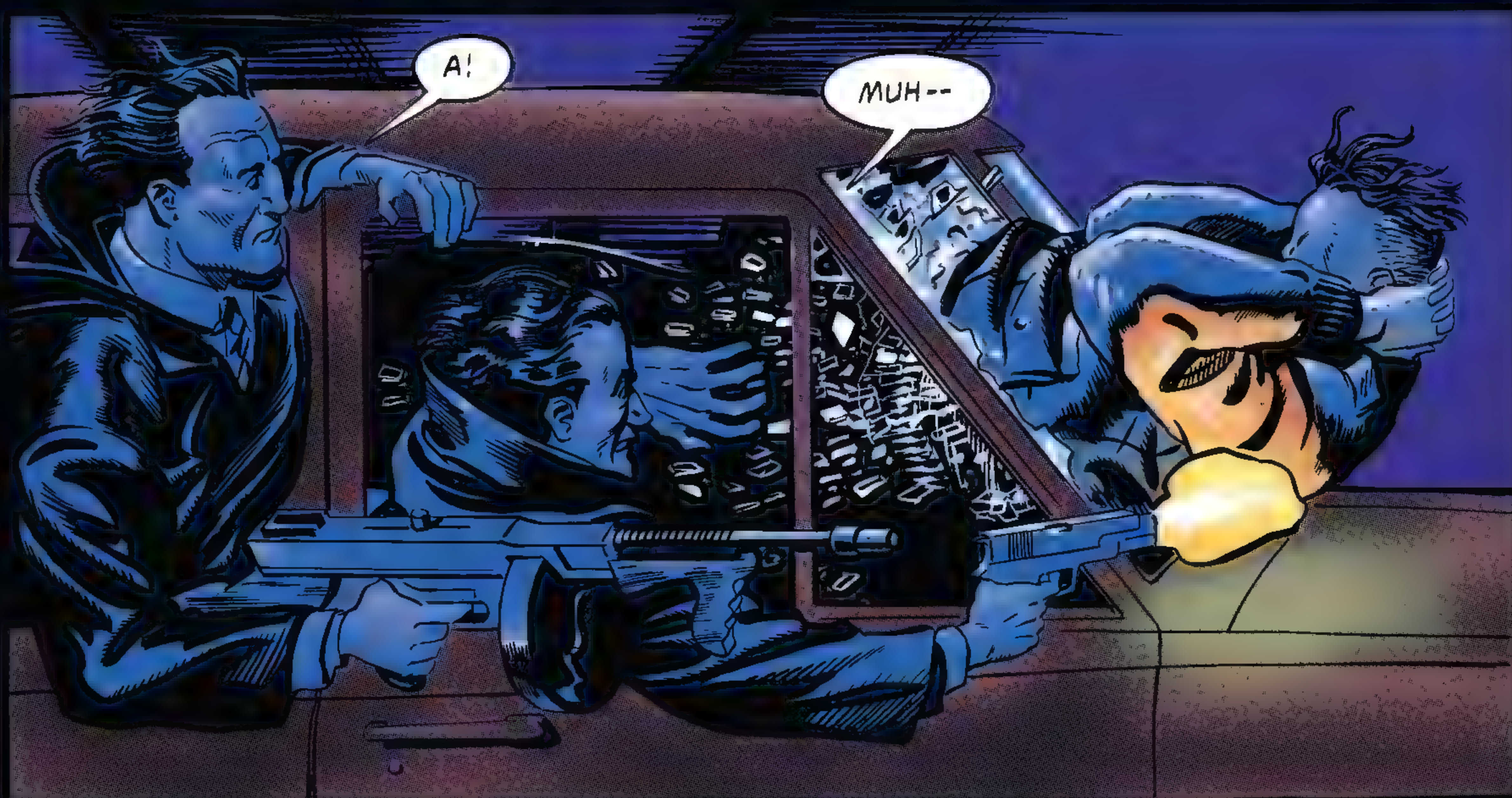


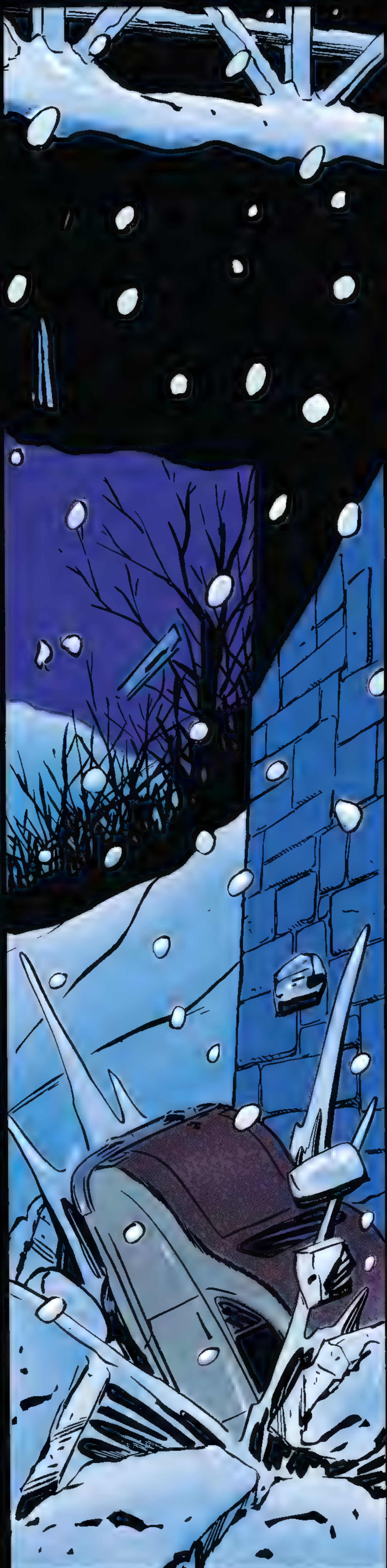
GET
HIM!

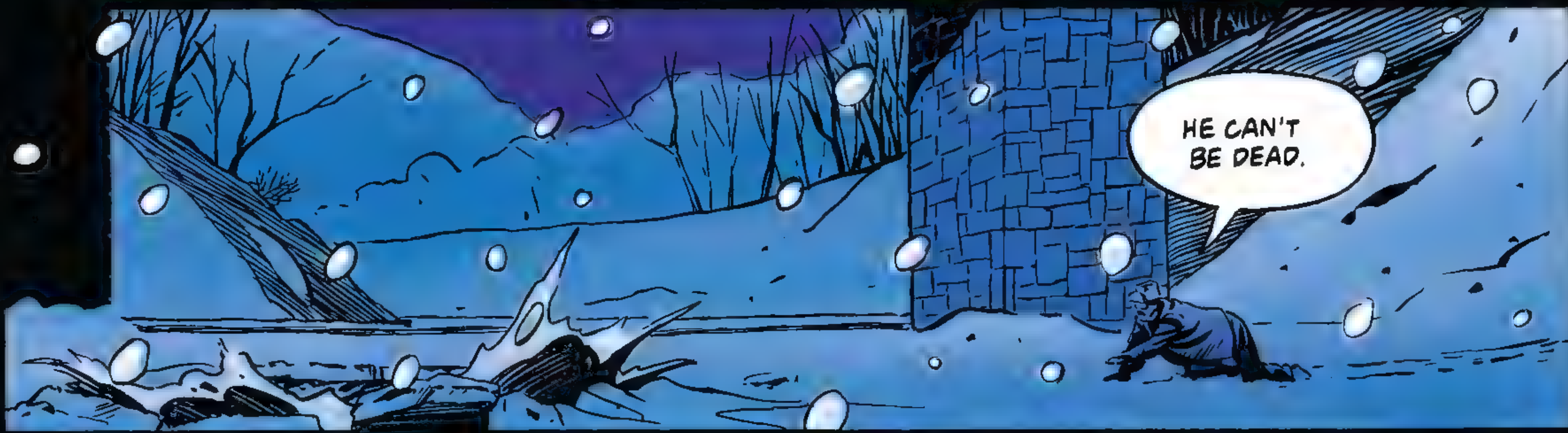


SHOOT!

KILL THE
SONOVA--



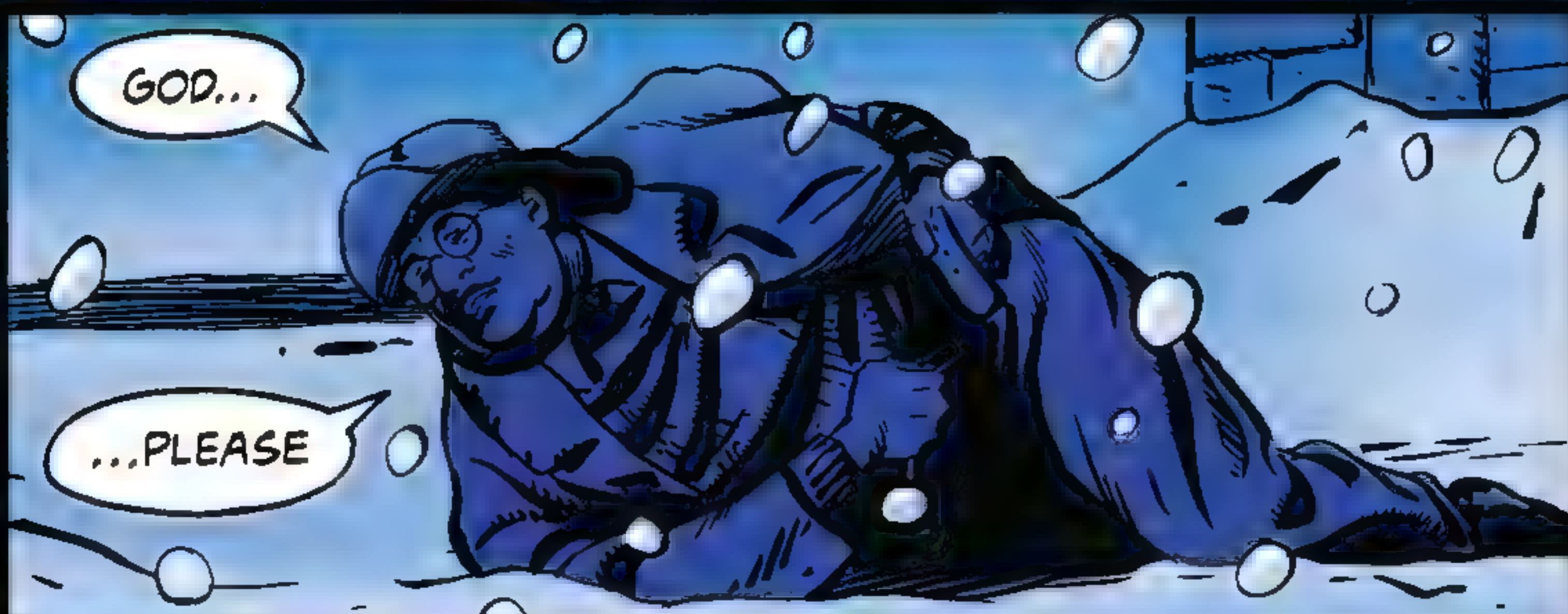




HE CAN'T
BE DEAD.

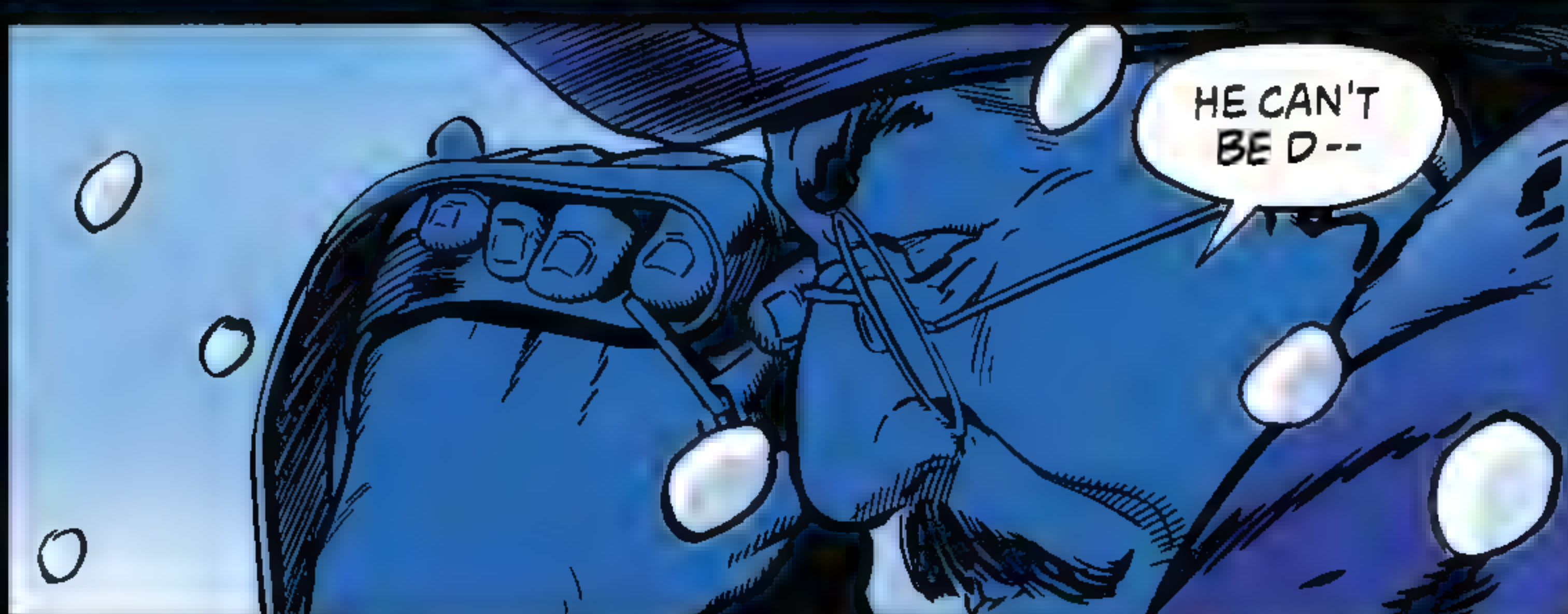


MUSTN'T.



GOD...

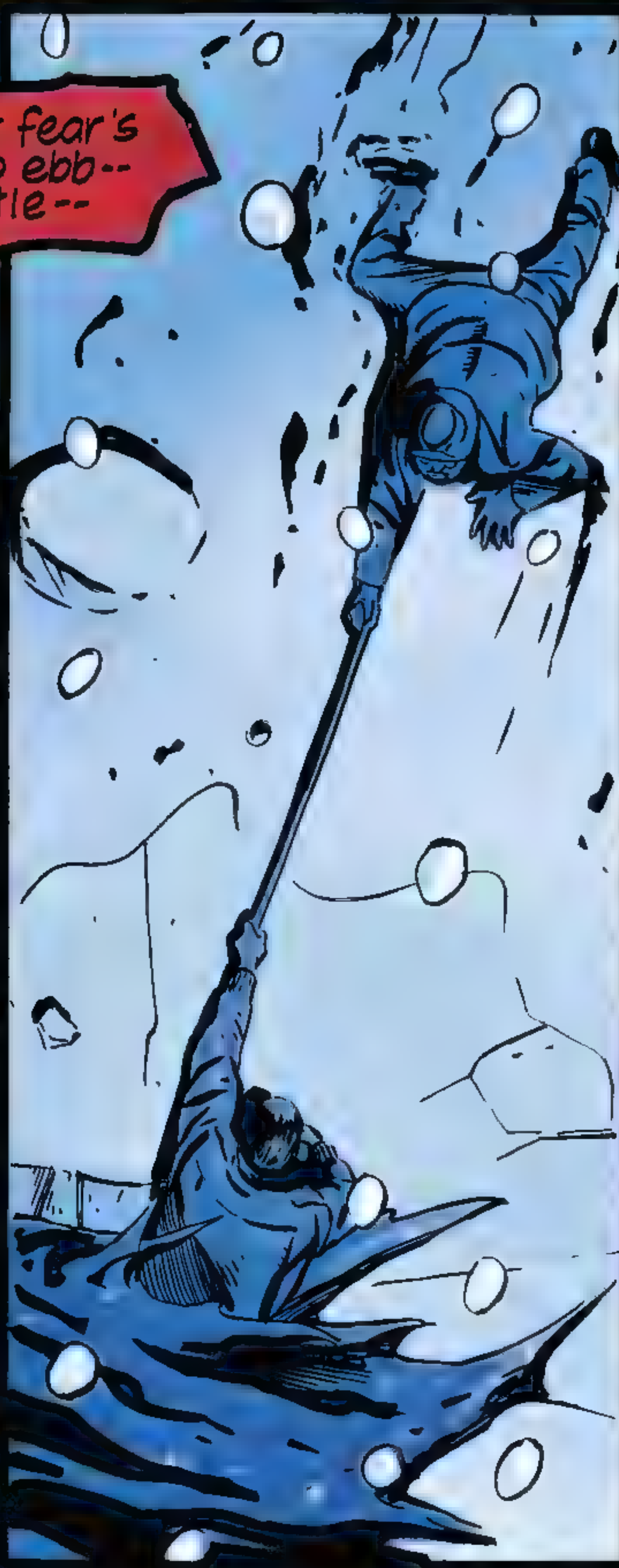
...PLEASE



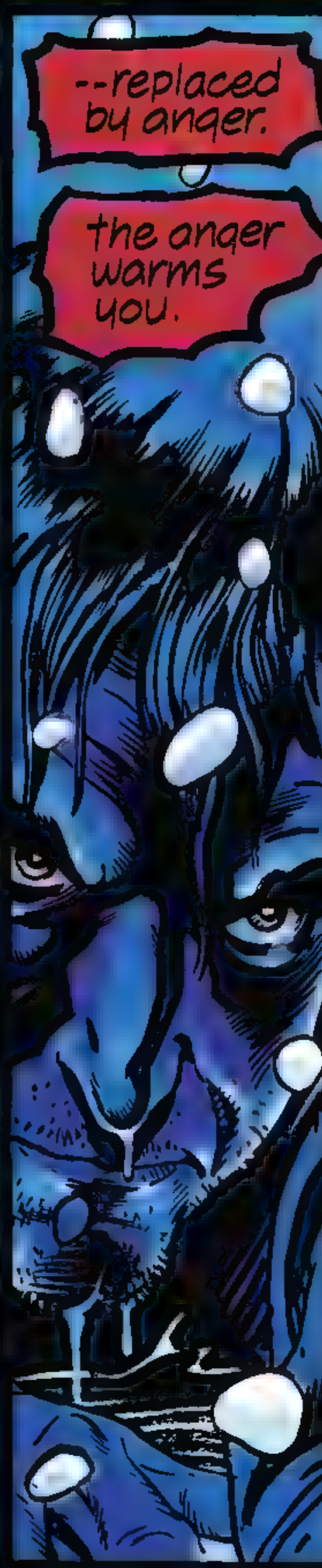
HE CAN'T
BE D--



cold beyond
cold--beyond
feeling--



yet your fear's
begun to ebb--
a little--



--replaced
by anger.

the anger
warms
you.









"We
had
prosperity."

1999...

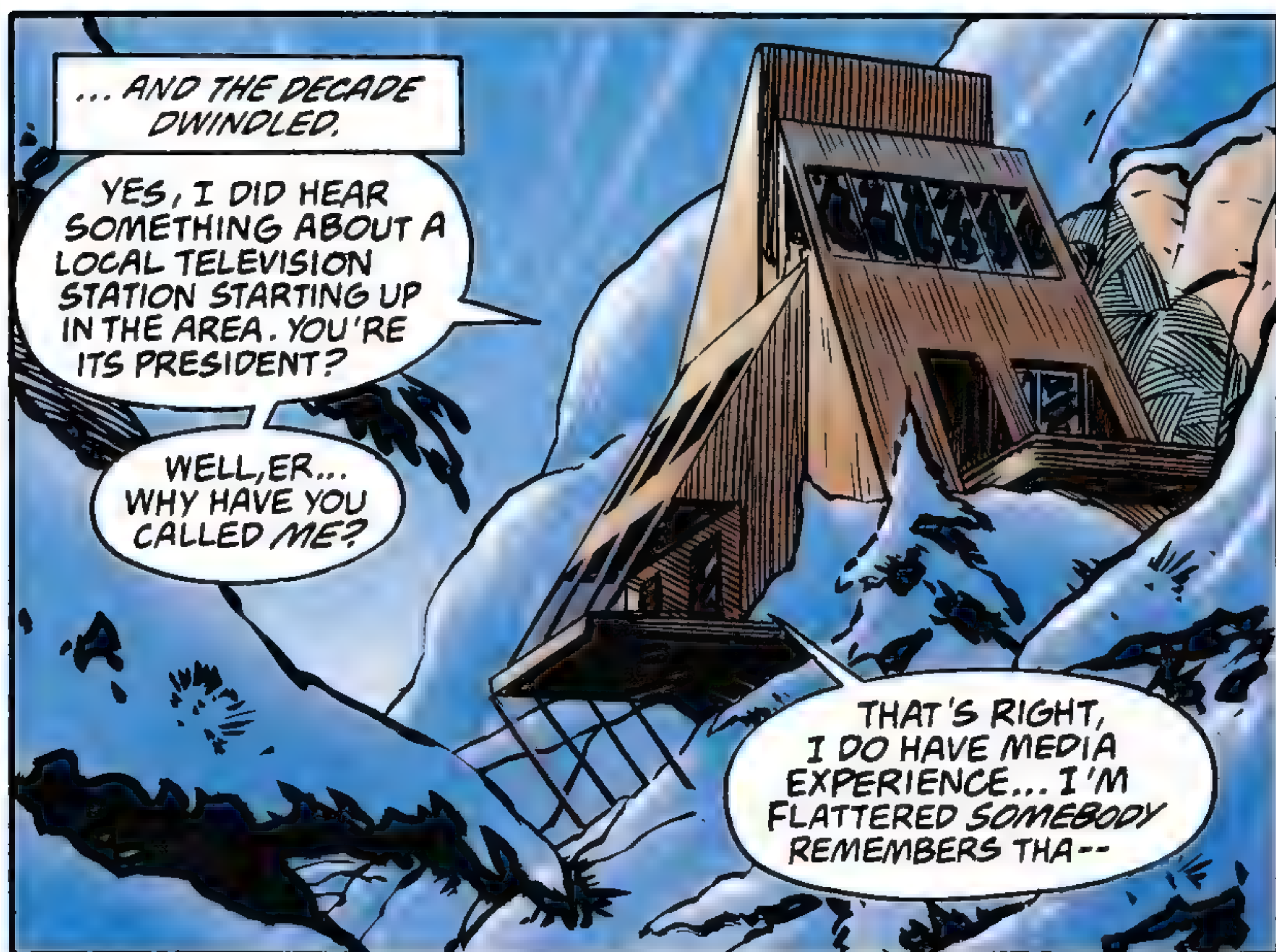
...BEGAN LIKE ALL YEARS, WITH
THE AFTERTASTE OF THE YEAR
PRIOR STILL IN PEOPLE'S MOUTHS...
ON PEOPLE'S MINDS.

IT BEGAN WITH SENATOR TEX
THOMPSON'S VISION OF A
POLITICALLY CORRECT SUPER-HERO
SPREAD NATIONWIDE, HEARD
OF IN COUNTLESS SPEECHES...

... AND SEEN ON
COUNTLESS
BILLBOARDS.



1999...



AT THE MOMENT... JON
ISN'T PLEASED. WITH
HIS LIFE... OR THE WORDS
ON THE PAGE.

IN MY
HEAD THERE'S
BRILLIANCE.

had been Lulabelle's so
illumination as she app
er makeup. Because of
t came to her immediat
attention and turning w
ager eyes, she ran to
loor. Such was her hast
that the lipstick she'd
ought yesterday aftern
was left to roll off th
of her dresser, falling
the floor and breaking
fine new redness on the
filth of the carpet. T
lulabelle hadn't notice
or would she have care
he had.

The door to her tr
was thrown open by her,
force that only passi
and longing can bring.

figure, this hulking ma

ON THE PAGE
IT TURNS TO
CRAP.

ALAN SCOTT HOPES
HIS LIES SOUND
CONVINCING.

THERE HAS TO
BE MORE THAN
THIS.

THIS IS
THE LIFE!

SWEET...

...THE
FEELING.

SWEET...THE
MEMORIES.

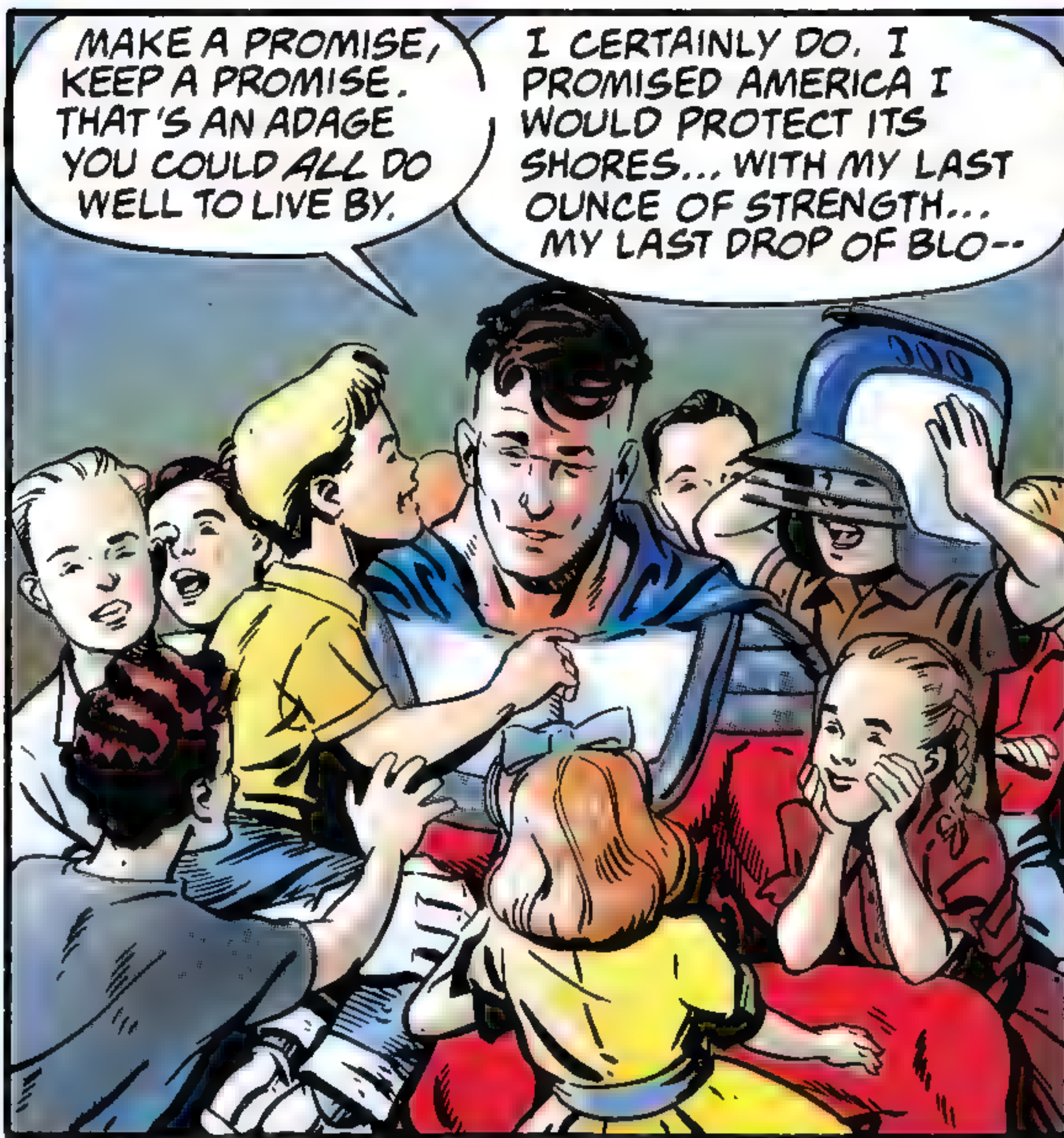
SWEET
DREAMS,
PAUL.

...POWERS
OF DANIEL
DUNBAR...



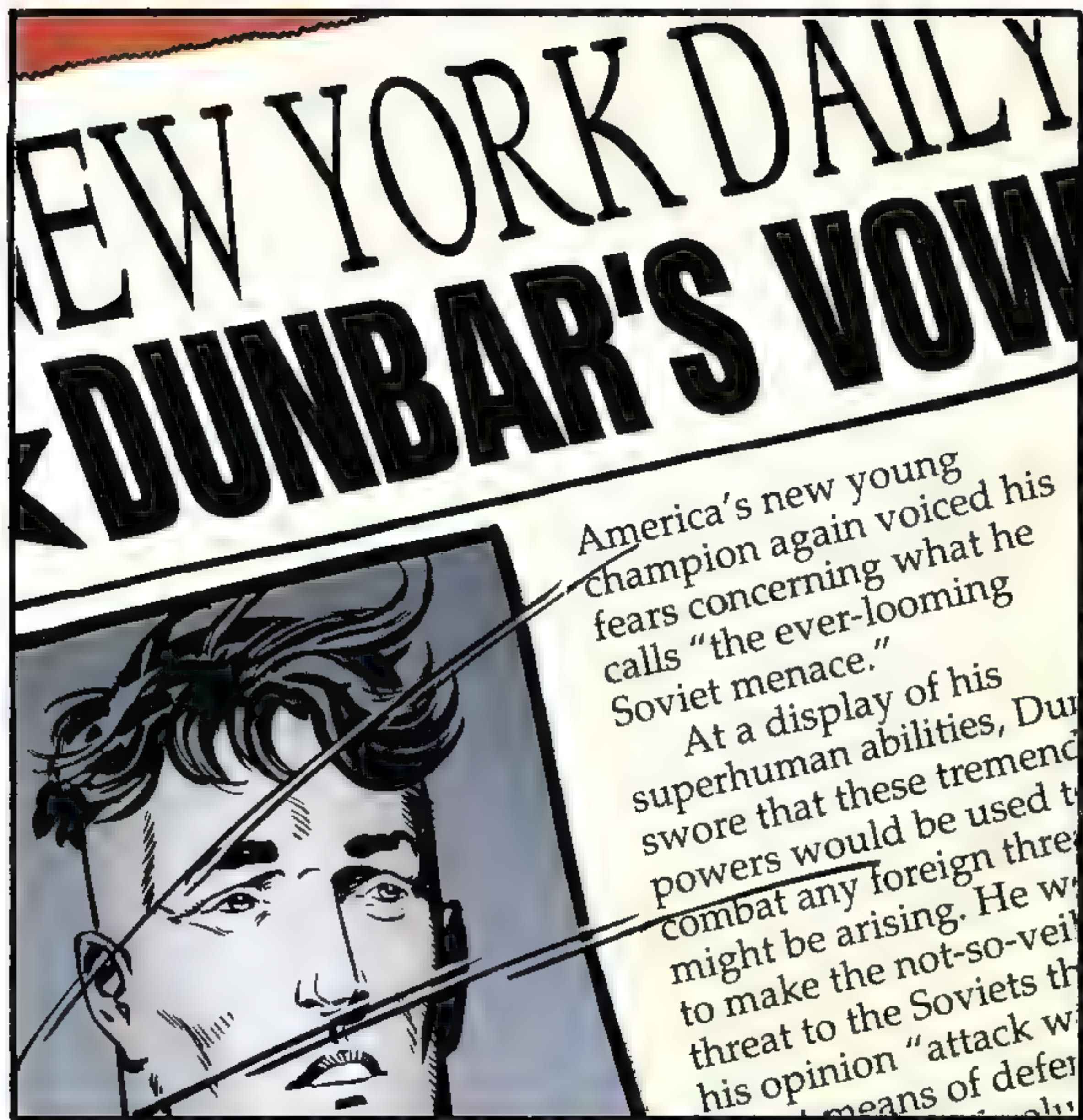
... WHICH CONTINUE TO DAZZLE THE PUBLIC IN THE EXHIBITIONS OF HIS STRENGTH AND POWER THAT HAVE BEEN HELD ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

THOUGH ALMOST AS EXTRAORDINARY ARE THE YOUNG MAN'S SKILLS AS AN ORATOR.



MAKE A PROMISE, KEEP A PROMISE. THAT'S AN ADAGE YOU COULD ALL DO WELL TO LIVE BY.

I CERTAINLY DO. I PROMISED AMERICA I WOULD PROTECT ITS SHORES... WITH MY LAST OUNCE OF STRENGTH... MY LAST DROP OF BLO--



NEW YORK DAILY DUNBAR'S VOW

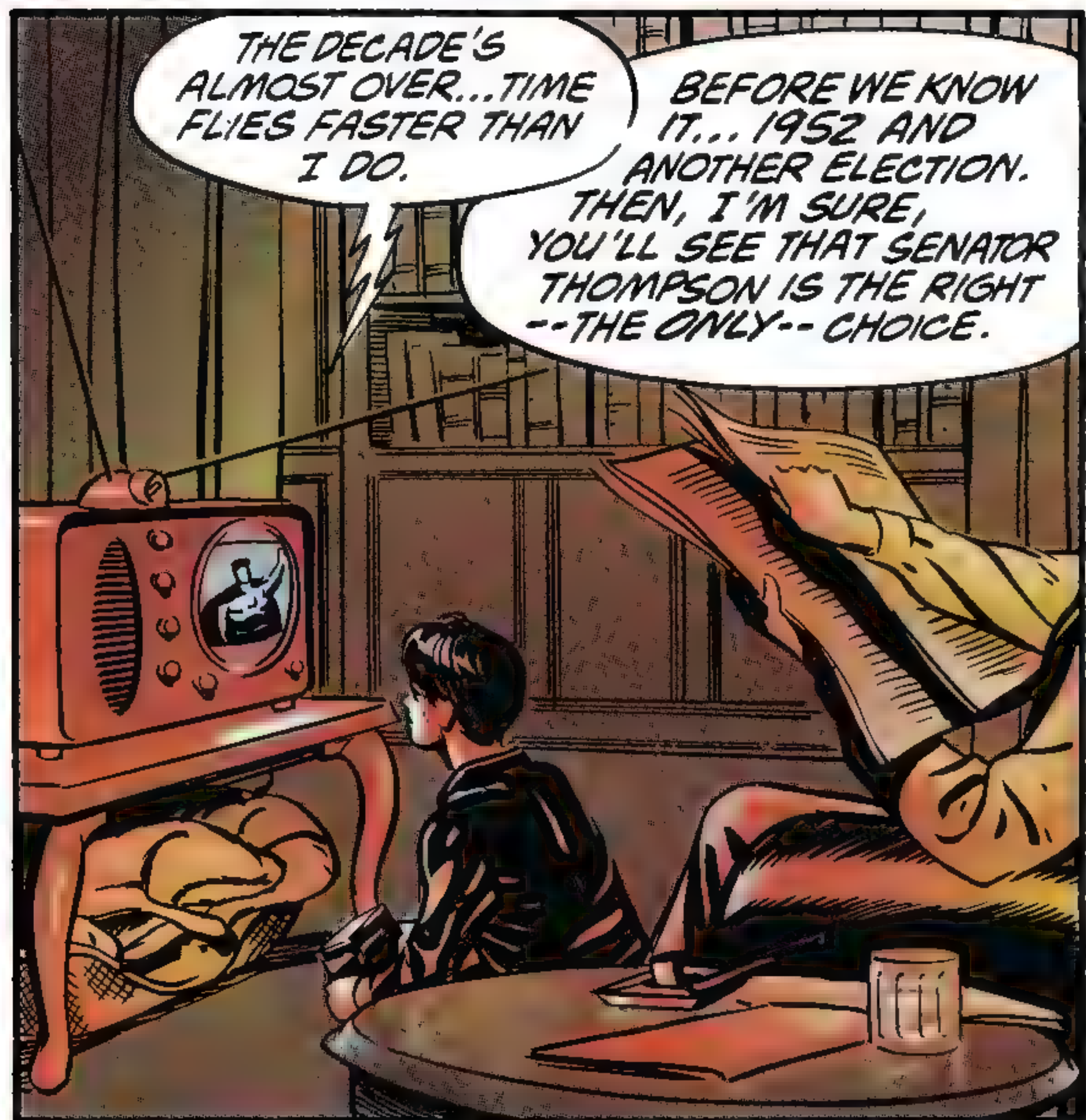
America's new young champion again voiced his fears concerning what he calls "the ever-looming Soviet menace."

At a display of his superhuman abilities, Dunbar swore that these tremendous powers would be used to combat any foreign threat might be arising. He went on to make the not-so-veiled threat to the Soviets that in his opinion "attack will be met by means of defense."



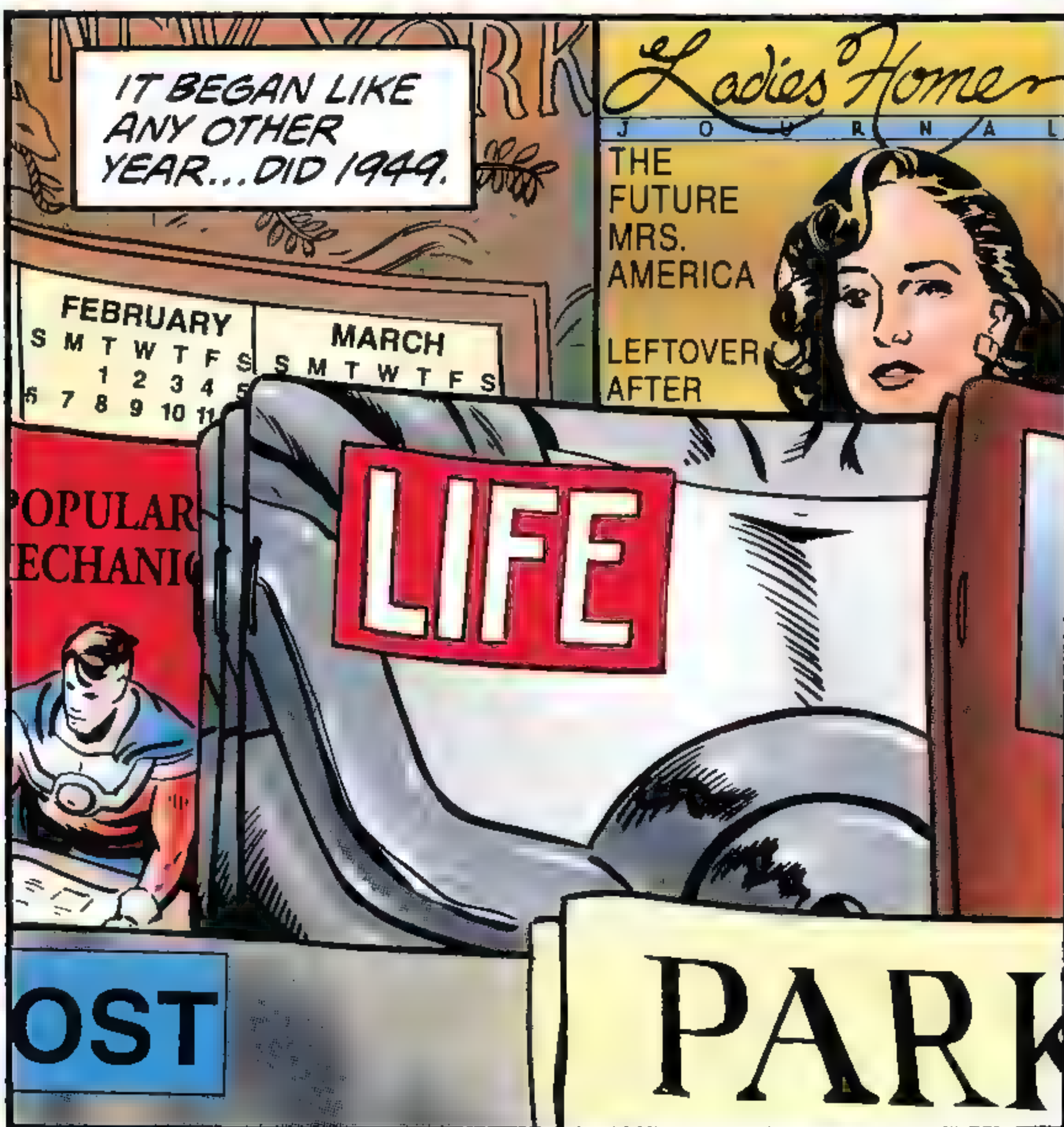
AND AS YOU CAN SEE, THE GALA BALL WAS WELL ATTENDED.

WHY, THERE'S DANIEL DUNBAR TAKING A MOMENT TO BE INTRODUCED TO RISING MOVIE STARLET DORIS DAY.



THE DECADE'S ALMOST OVER... TIME FLIES FASTER THAN I DO.

BEFORE WE KNOW IT... 1952 AND ANOTHER ELECTION. THEN, I'M SURE, YOU'LL SEE THAT SENATOR THOMPSON IS THE RIGHT -- THE ONLY -- CHOICE.



IT BEGAN LIKE ANY OTHER YEAR... DID 1949.

Ladies Home Journal
THE FUTURE MRS. AMERICA
LEFTOVER AFTER

FEBRUARY
S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

MARCH
S M T W T F S

POPULAR MECHANICS

LIFE

OST

PARK



THE DEVICE IS
READY FOR TESTING...
AND ITS INVENTOR
WHISPERS A PRAYER
OF HOPE...

...THOUGH
NOT TO ANY
GOD.



BUT RATHER
TO THOSE HE
WORSHIPS.

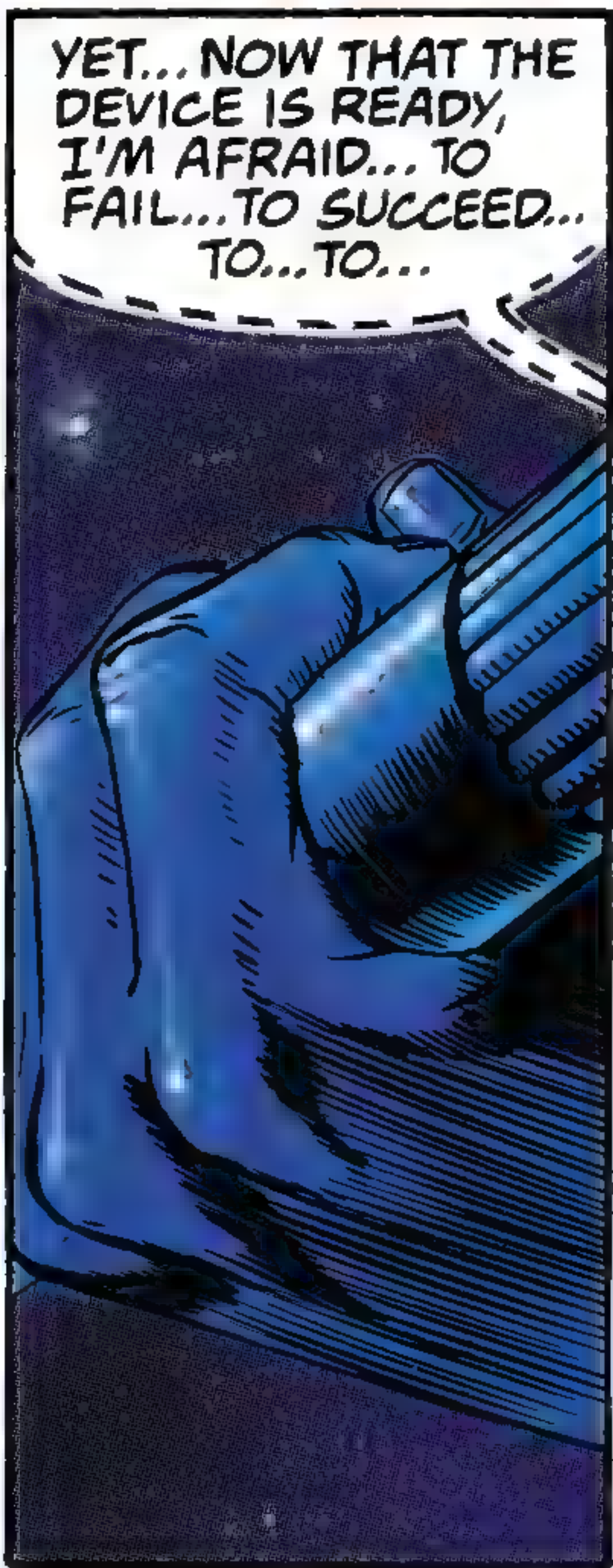
STARS...
I HAVE LOVED
YOU FOR SO
LONG.



AND YOU
IN TURN HAVE
GIVEN ME SUCH
POWER.



I'VE IMPROVED ON IT
... OUR GRAVITY ROD.
COULDN'T HELP
MYSELF... COULDN'T.
CAN'T STOP IDEAS...
THEY'RE LIKE THE
WIND... THE TIDE.

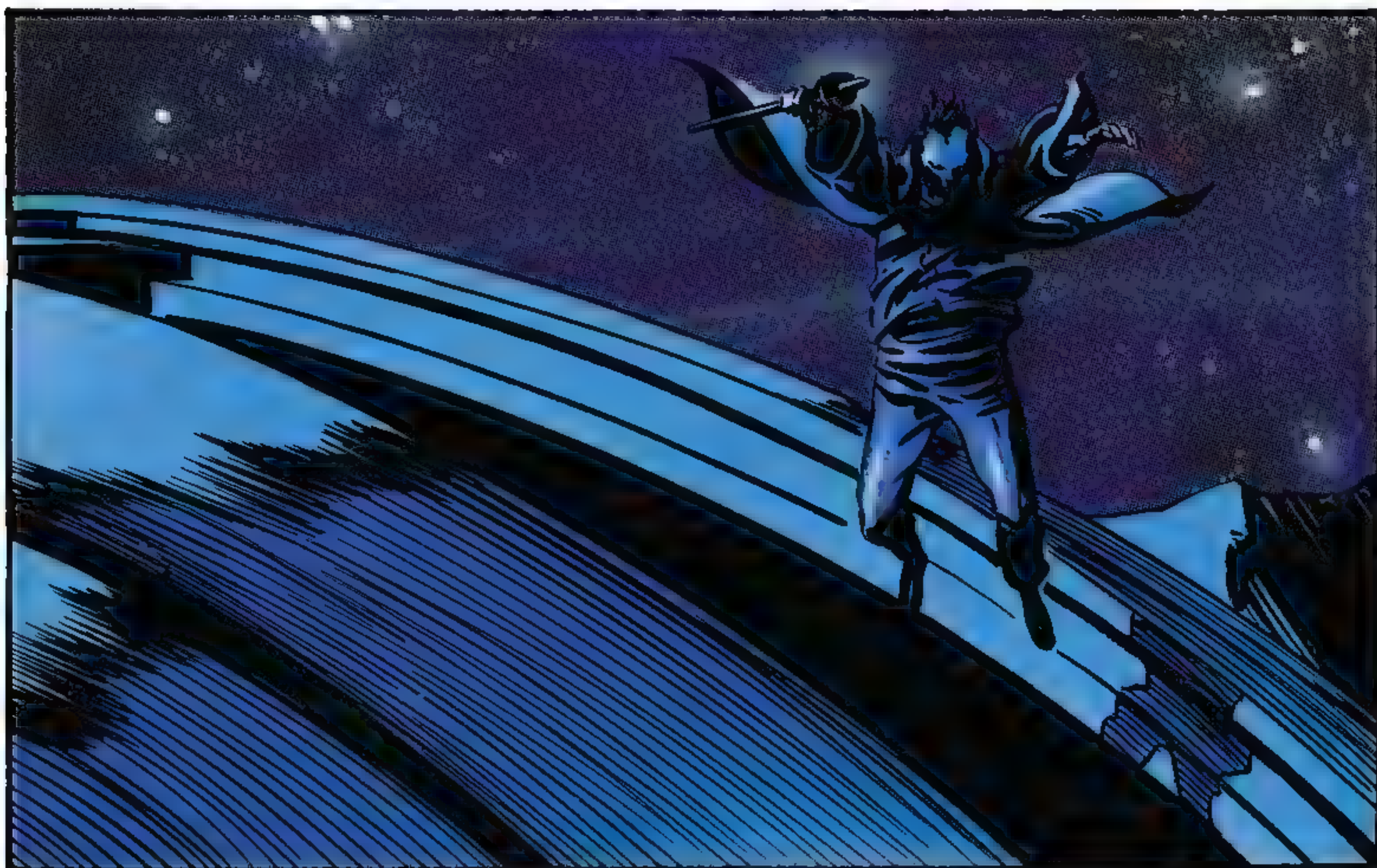
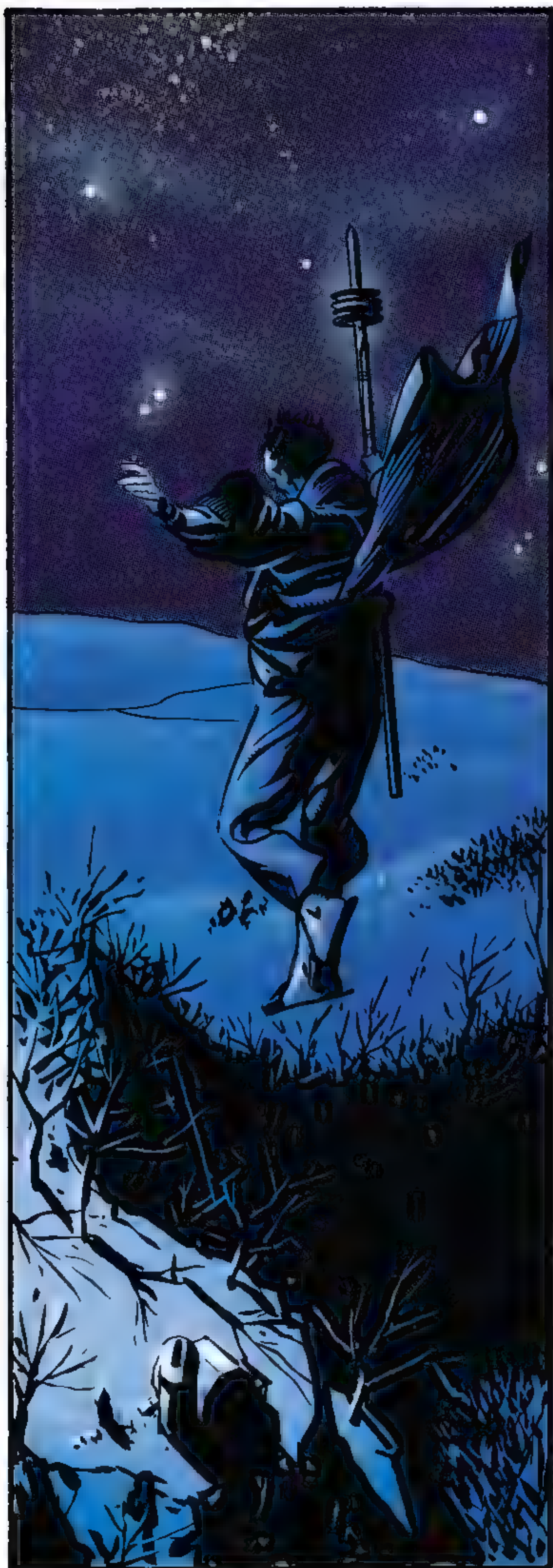
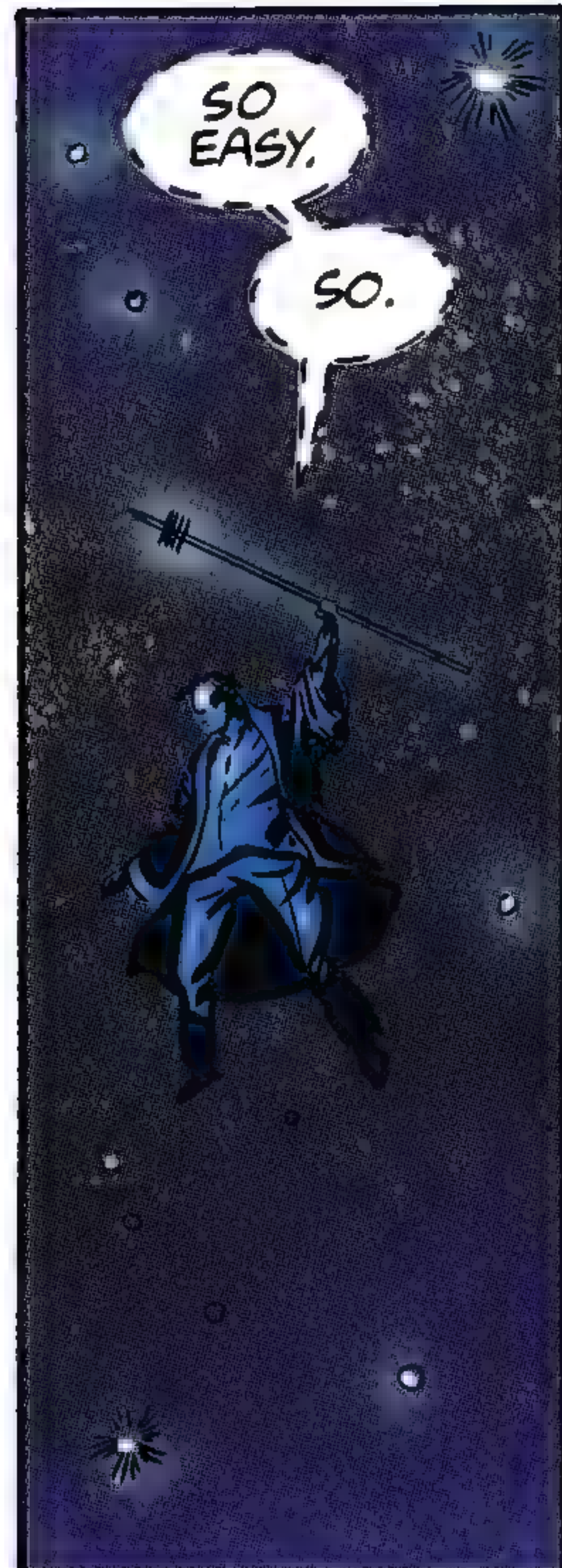


YET... NOW THAT THE
DEVICE IS READY,
I'M AFRAID... TO
FAIL... TO SUCCEED...
TO... TO...



DAMN.







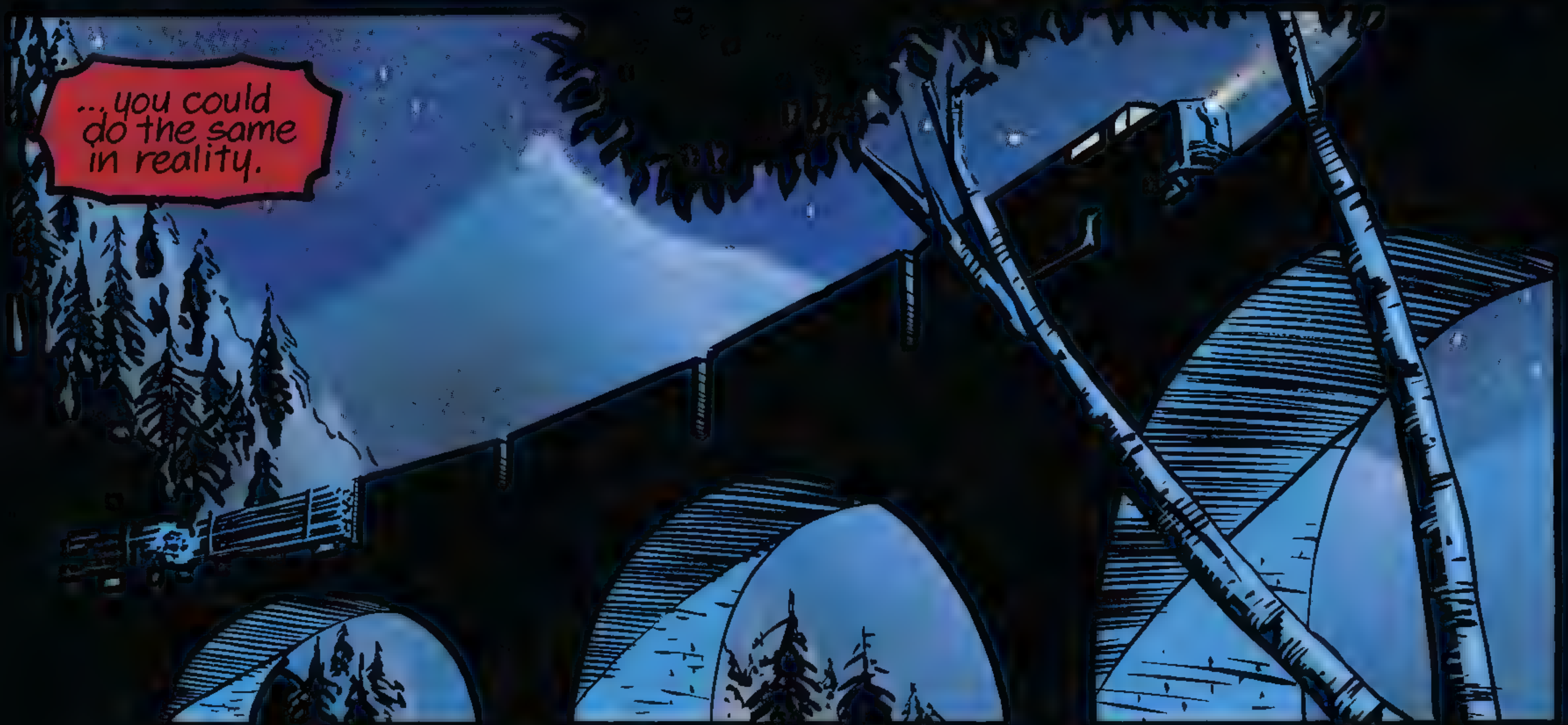
the dream
varies.

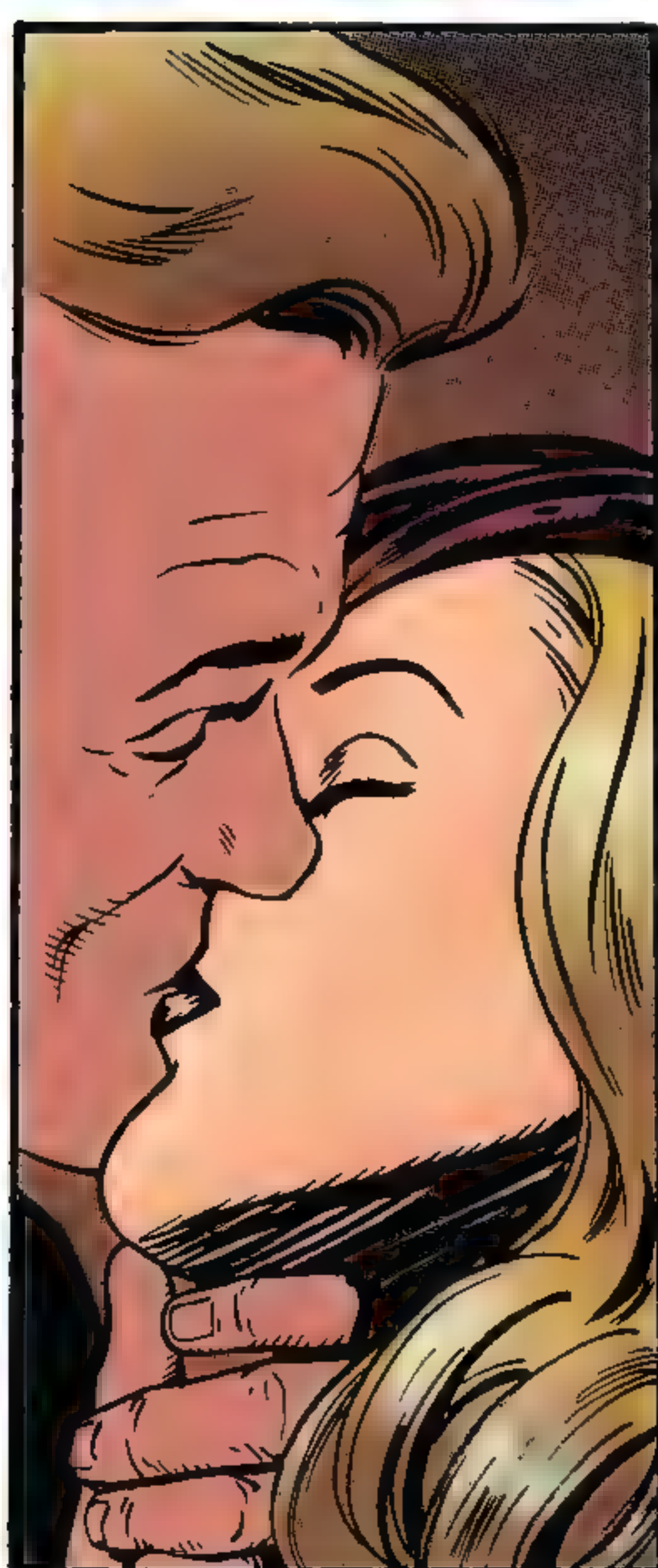
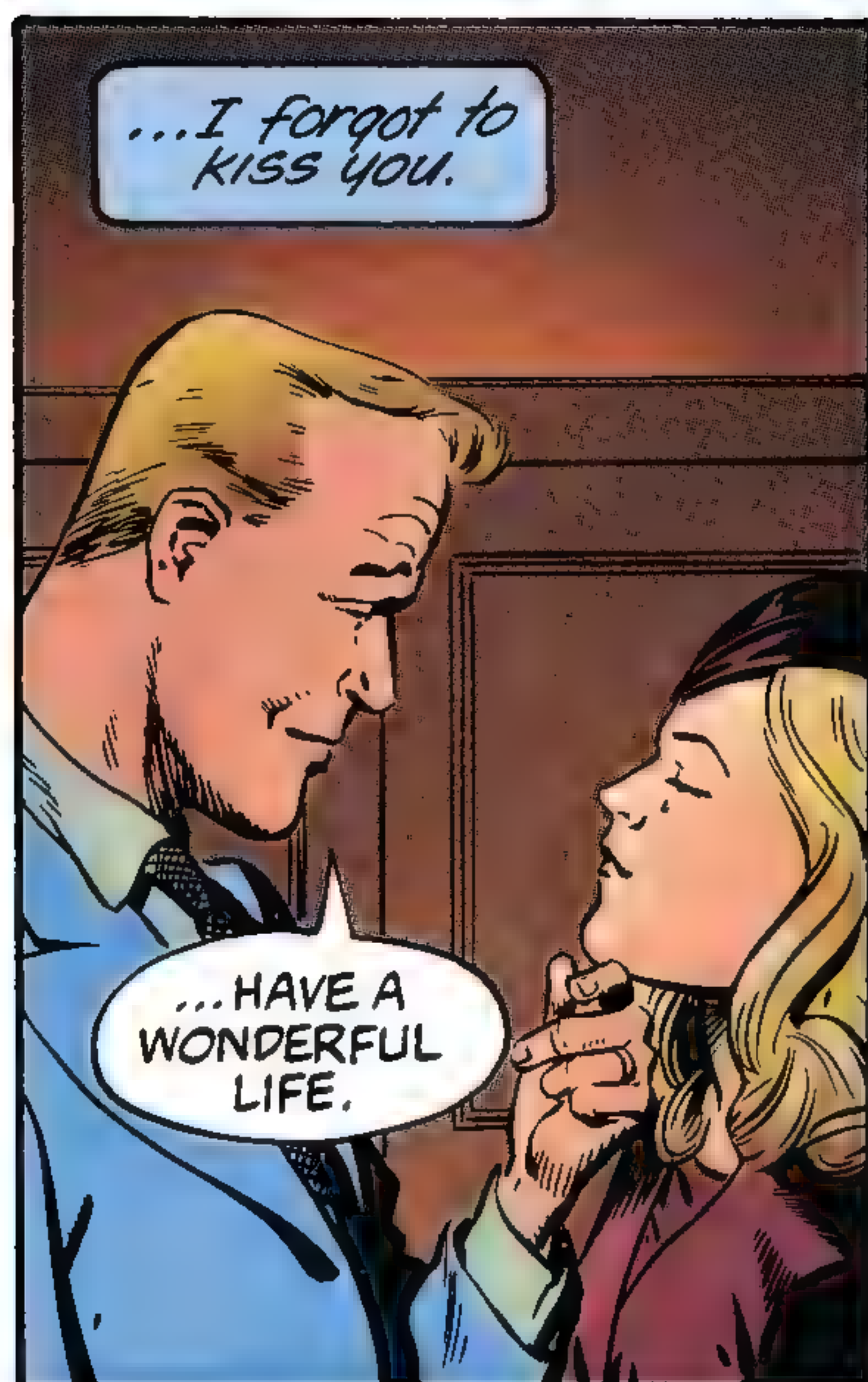
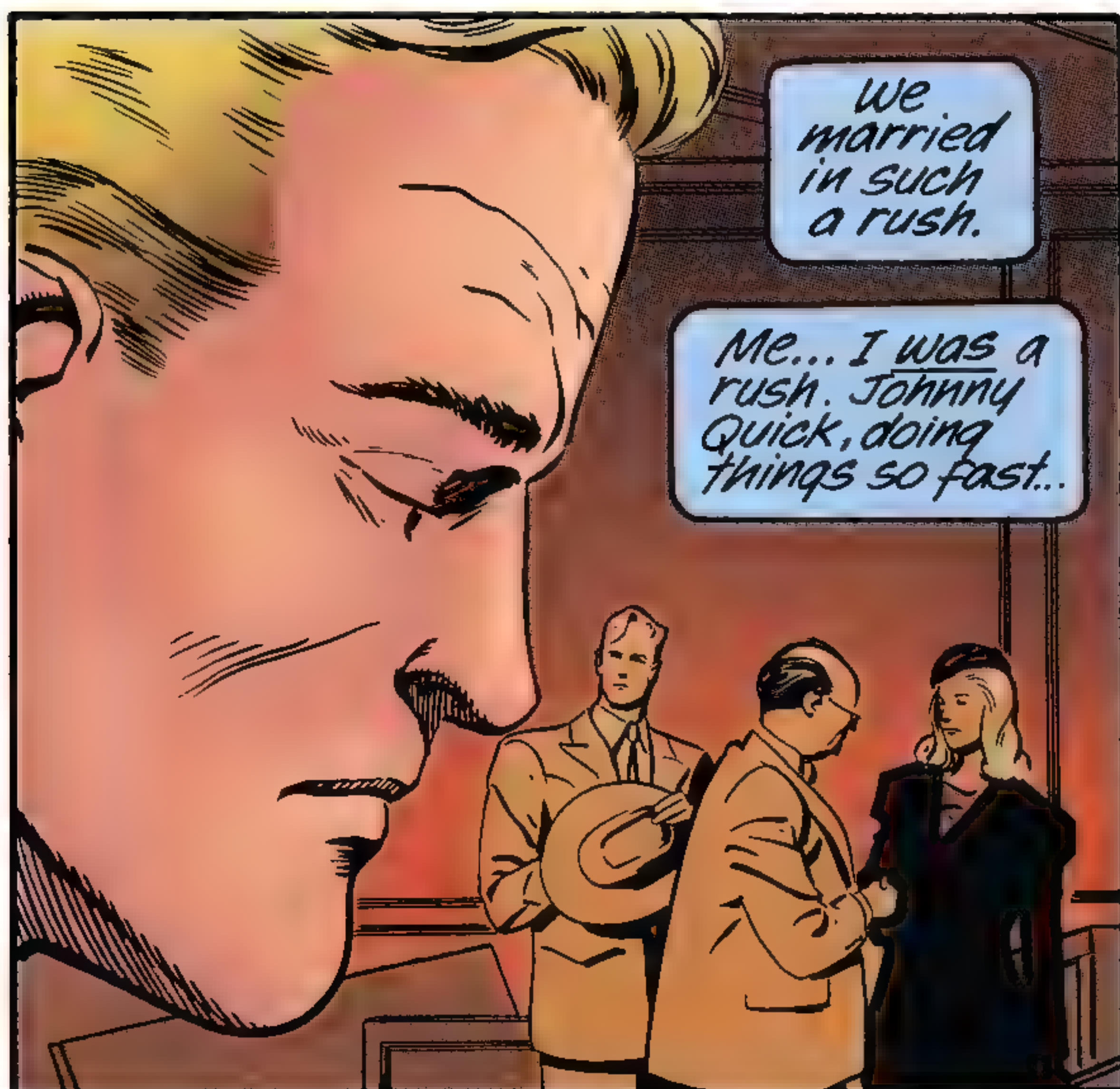
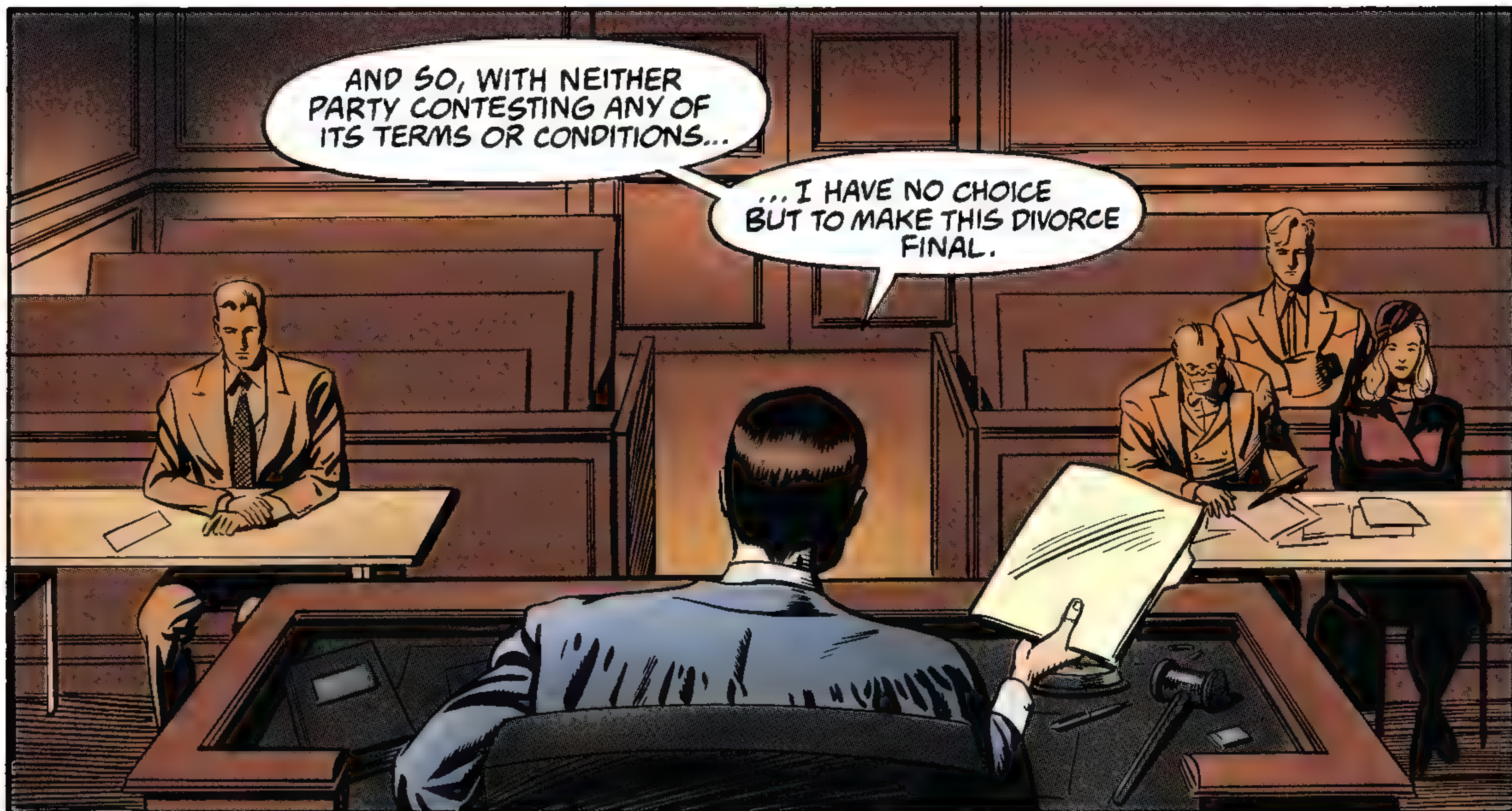
the dream
remains the
same.



PAUL.

PAUL!







SPRING... THE TIME
OF BIRTH AND RENEWAL.
FRESH THOUGHTS AND
FRESH WAYS.

FOR MANY, THIS...
IS THE *BEST*
TIME OF ANY
YEAR.

BUT NOT
FOR ALL

THE REQUEST
COMING FROM SENATOR
THOMPSON AND HIS
SUPERPOWERED PROTÉGÉ,
DANIEL DUNBAR...

WE'VE
GOT A
PROBLEM.

PROBLEM?



THIS AFTERNOON'S
COMEDY PLAY... THE
DIALOGUE... NEEDS
A REWRITE.

... AND GOING
OUT TO AMERICA'S
MYSTERY MEN,
BOTH ACTIVE
AND RETIRED.



THIS REQUEST, THAT THEY SHOULD
COME FORWARD AND PLEDGE ALLE-
GIANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT IN THESE
"POLITICALLY AMBIGUOUS" TIM--

YEAH, SO? I
THOUGHT BILL DANIELS
WAS ALREADY ON IT.

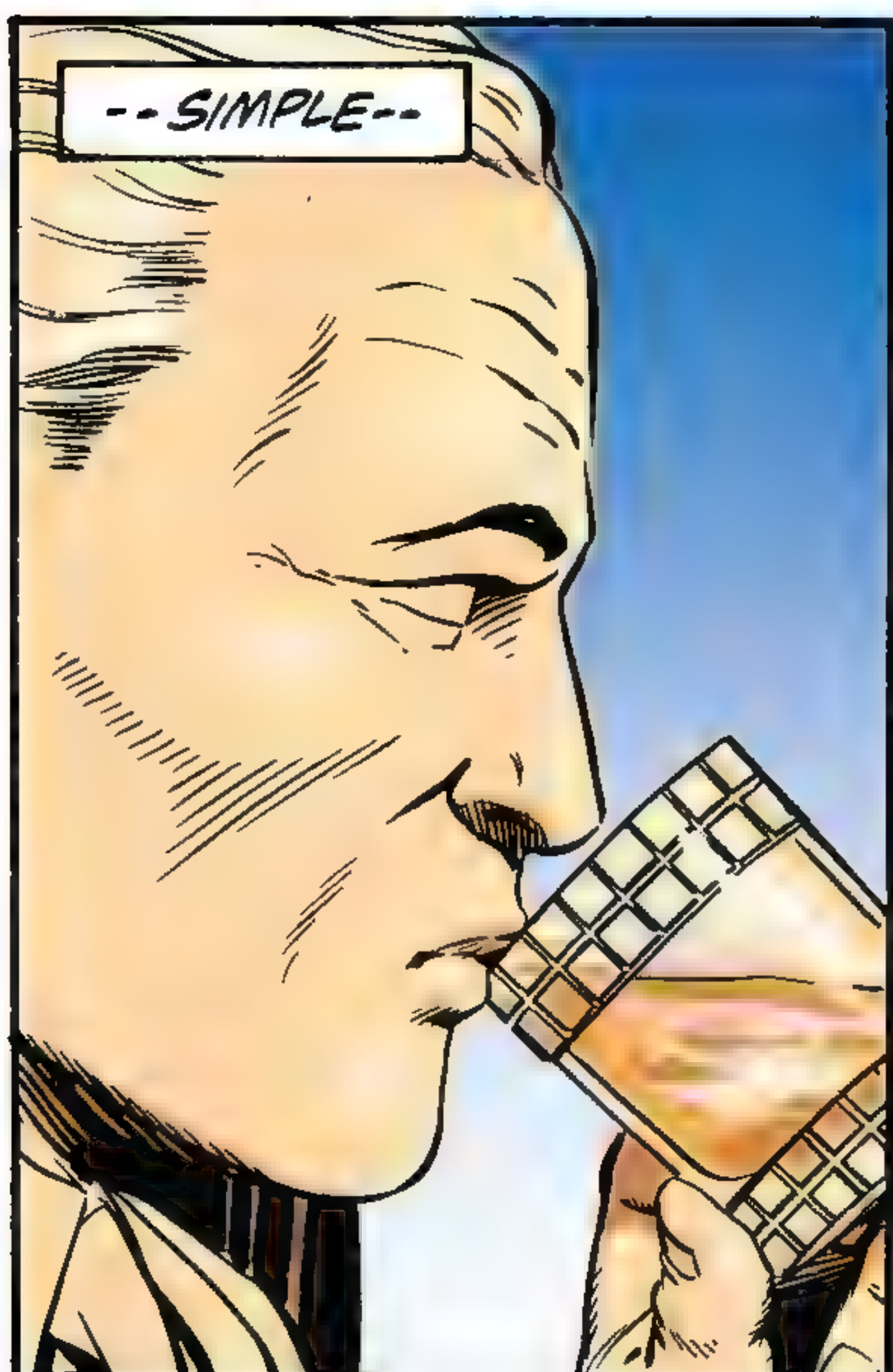
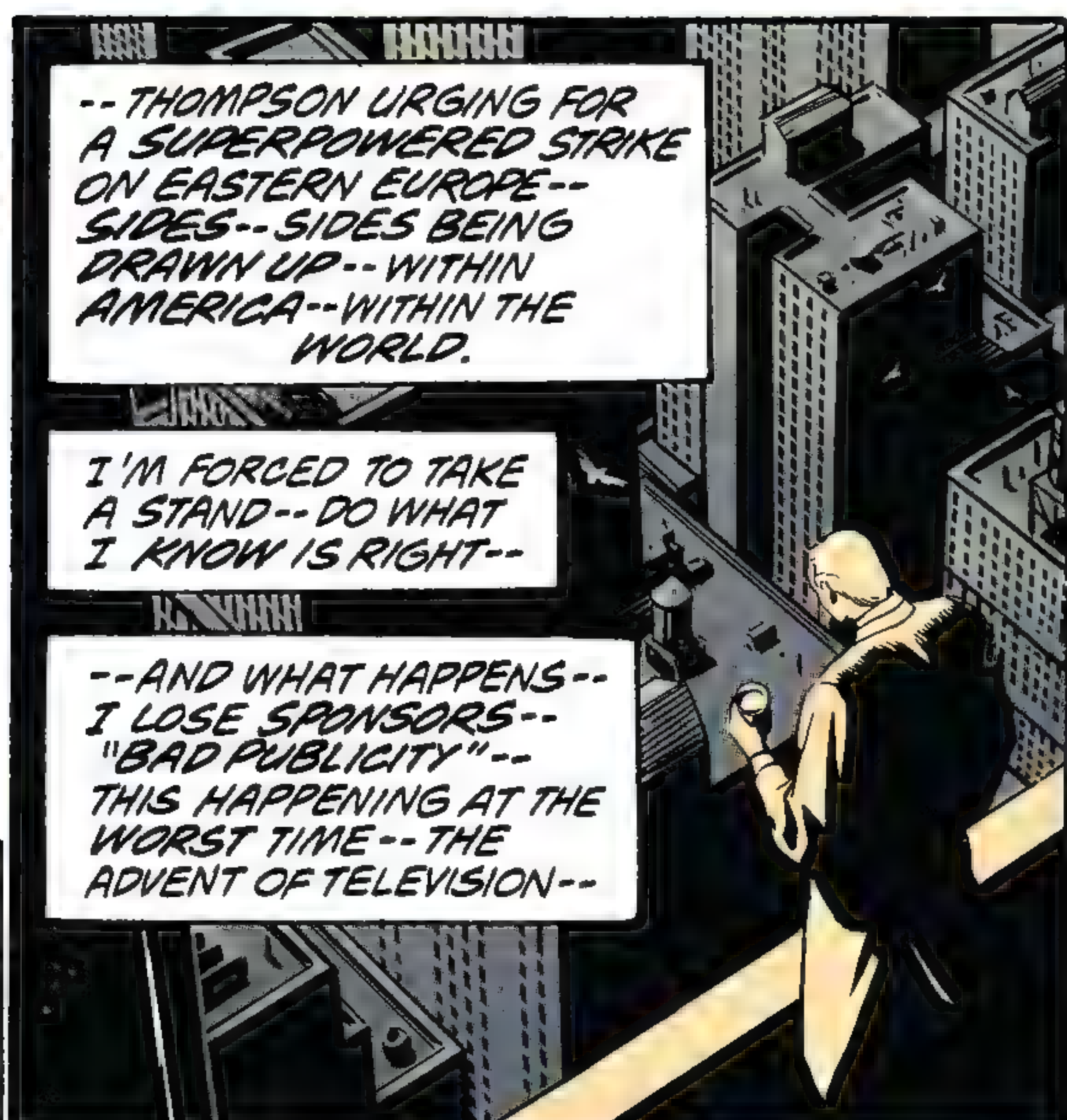
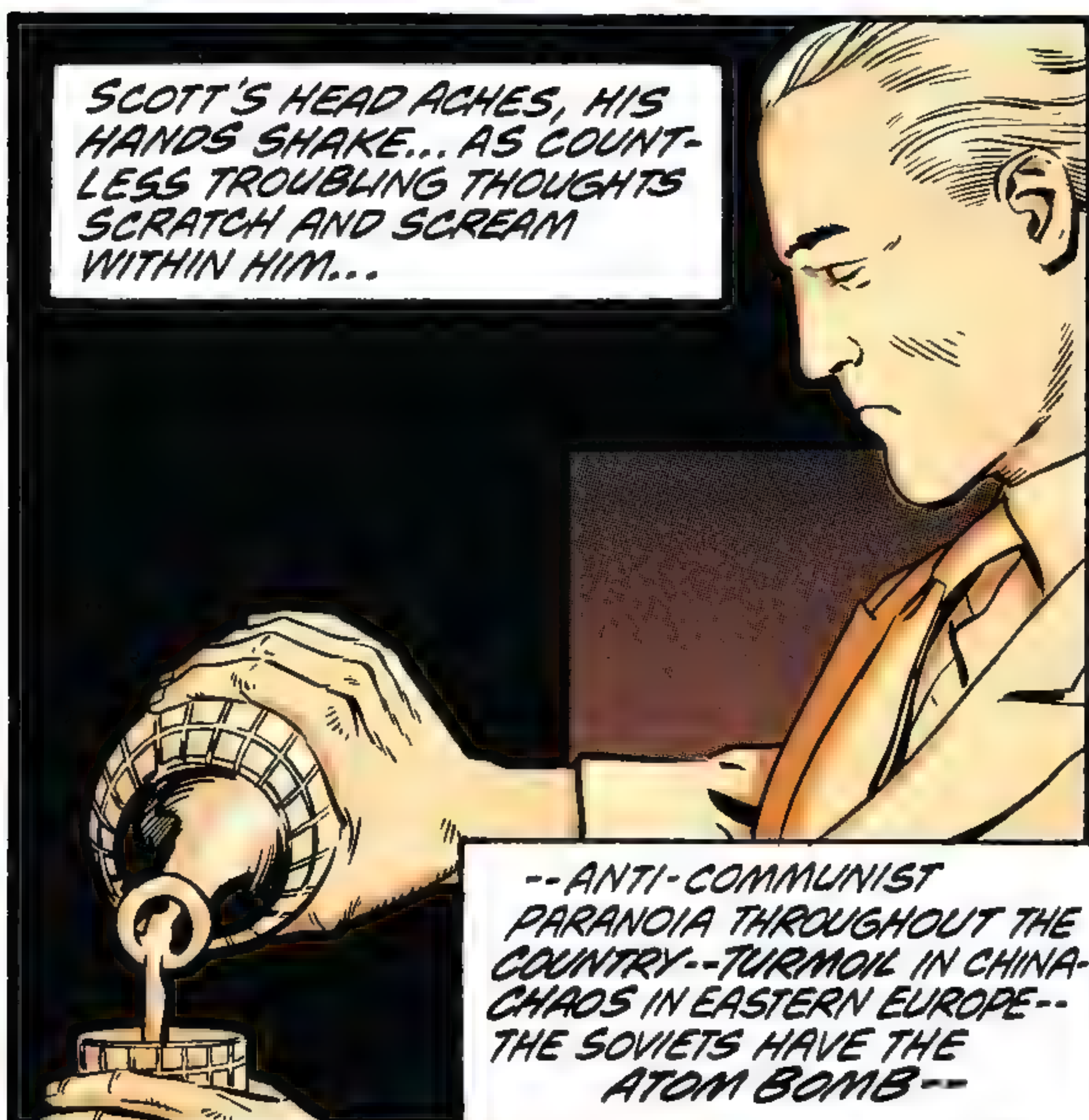


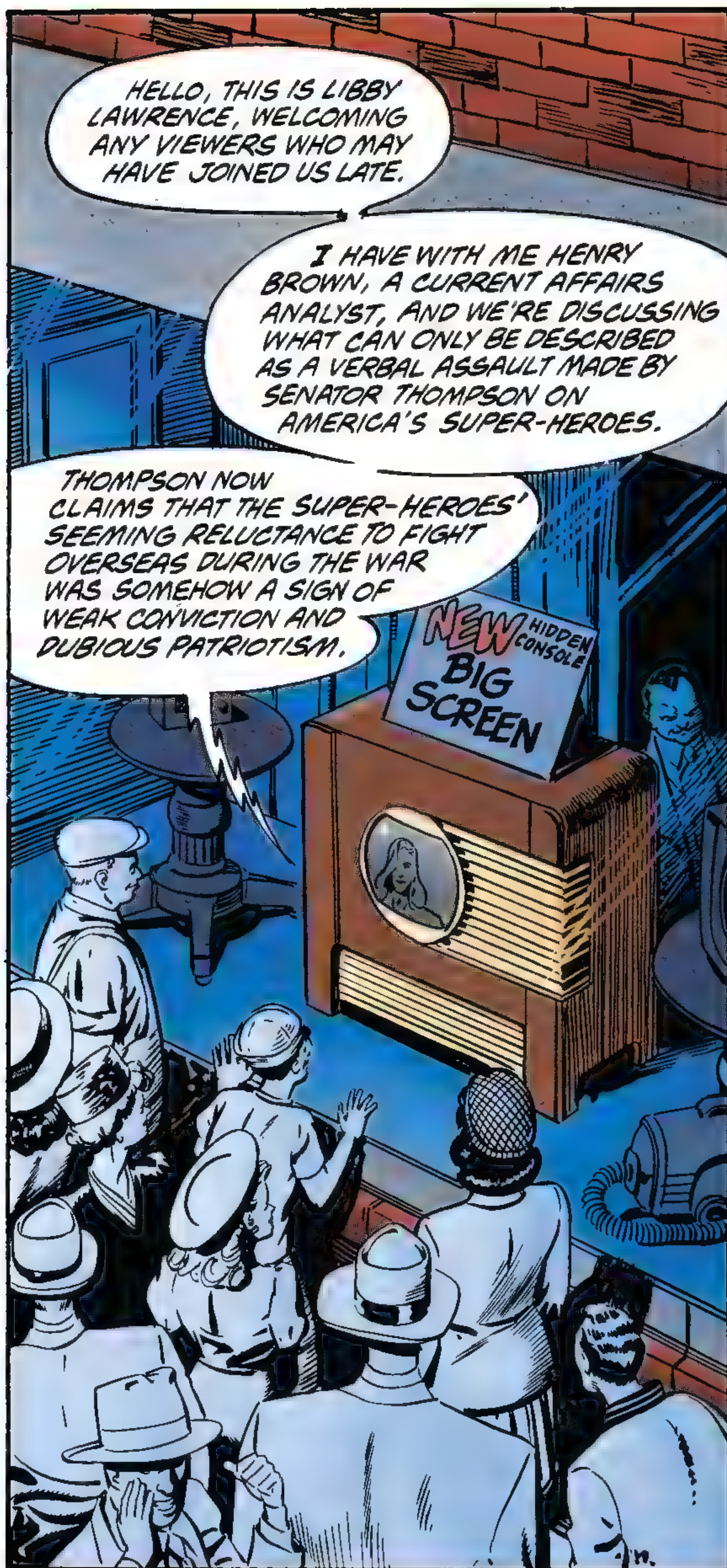
BILL... ER... AH...
BILL QUIT THIS
MORNING.

WHAT DO
YOU MEAN
HE QUIT?

HE'S CERTAIN
HE'S ABOUT TO BE
BROUGHT BEFORE
THE HUAC.

HE SAID HE DIDN'T
WANT TO DRAG YOU DOWN
WITH HIM. HE WAS THINK-
ING OF YOU, HOW YOU'D
STOOD BEHIND HIM...
BEHIND ALL YOUR WRITERS.





HELLO, THIS IS LIBBY LAWRENCE, WELCOMING ANY VIEWERS WHO MAY HAVE JOINED US LATE.

I HAVE WITH ME HENRY BROWN, A CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYST, AND WE'RE DISCUSSING WHAT CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS A VERBAL ASSAULT MADE BY SENATOR THOMPSON ON AMERICA'S SUPER-HEROES.

THOMPSON NOW CLAIMS THAT THE SUPER-HEROES' SEEMING RELUCTANCE TO FIGHT OVERSEAS DURING THE WAR WAS SOMEHOW A SIGN OF WEAK CONVICTION AND DUBIOUS PATRIOTISM.



MR. BROWN, COULD THOMPSON'S CLAIMS BE A REACTION TO THE APPARENT APATHY ON THE PART OF AMERICA'S MYSTERYMEN WITH REGARDS TO THE SENATOR'S CALL FOR A VOLUNTARY ALLEGIANCE PLEDGE?

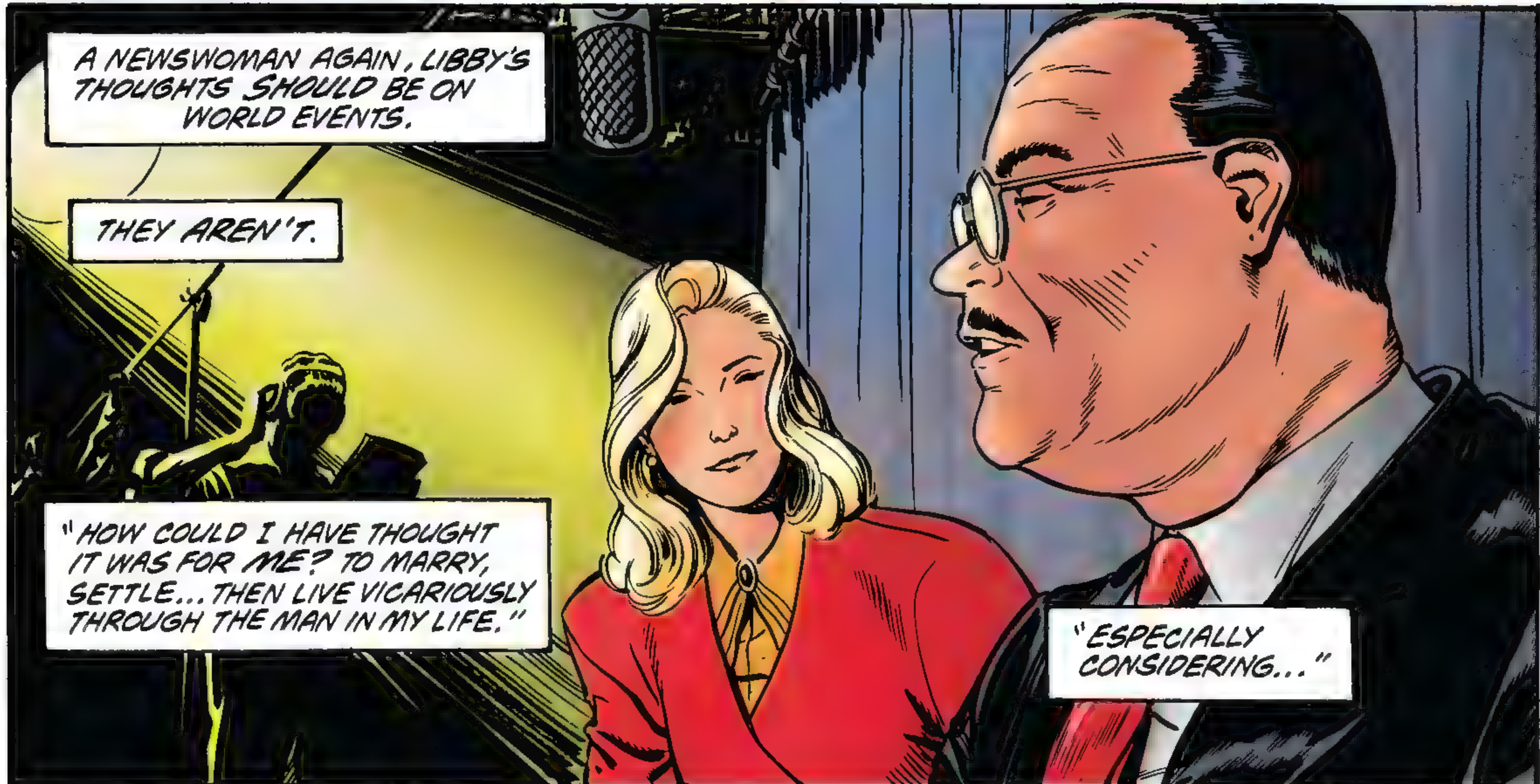
THAT'S INDEED A POSSIBILITY, LIBBY. AND CERTAINLY THOMPSON'S CLAIMS MIGHT HAVE BEEN GIVEN MORE CREDENCE IF NOT FOR JAMES FORRESTAL, EX-U.S. DEFENSE SECRETARY.

DUE TO HIS WARTIME POSITION, HE KNEW OF ROOSEVELT'S TENET PRECLUDING SUPER-HEROES FROM BECOMING PART OF THE FIGHTING OVERSEAS.

FORRESTAL'S BEEN VERY VOCAL IN REFUTING THOMPSON'S CLAIMS, MAKING THE MYSTERYMAN WAR-HERO LOOK... WELL, A LITTLE FOOLISH.

FORRESTAL'S ARDOR IN SPEAKING OUT... SOME FORM OF LOYALTY FOR THE MASKED VIGILANTES WHO GUARDED THE HOMEFRONT?

WELL, LIBBY... I THINK IT'S MORE TO DO WITH FORRESTAL'S OWN POLITICAL AMBITIONS BEING AT ODDS WITH THOSE OF--

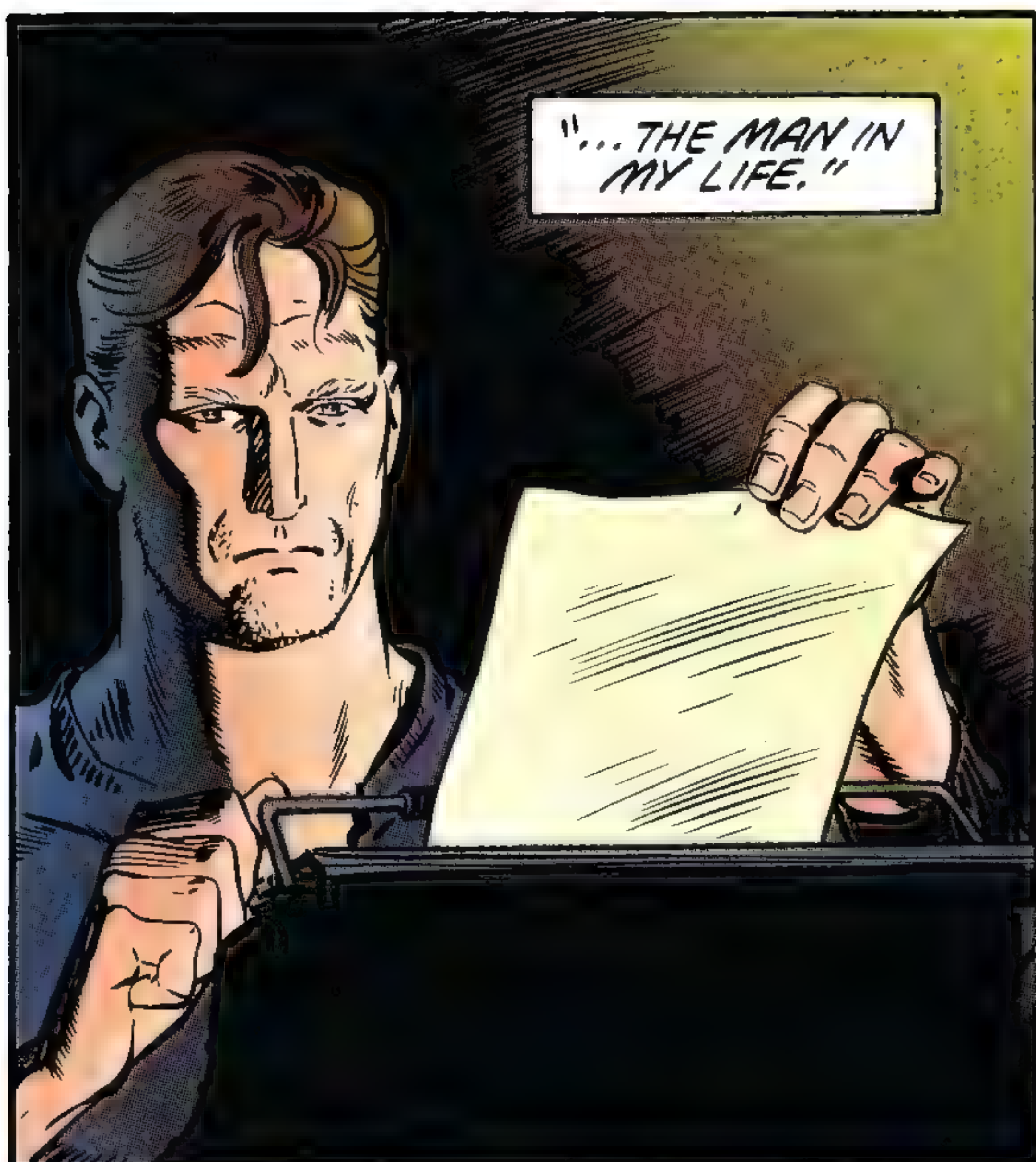


A NEWSWOMAN AGAIN, LIBBY'S THOUGHTS SHOULD BE ON WORLD EVENTS.

THEY AREN'T.

"HOW COULD I HAVE THOUGHT IT WAS FOR ME? TO MARRY, SETTLE... THEN LIVE VICARIOUSLY THROUGH THE MAN IN MY LIFE."

"ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING..."



door. Such was her haste, that the lipstick she'd bought yesterday afternoon was left to roll off the top of her dresser, falling to the floor and breaking its fine new redness on the filth of the carpet. This, Lulabelle hadn't noticed. Nor would she have cared if she had.

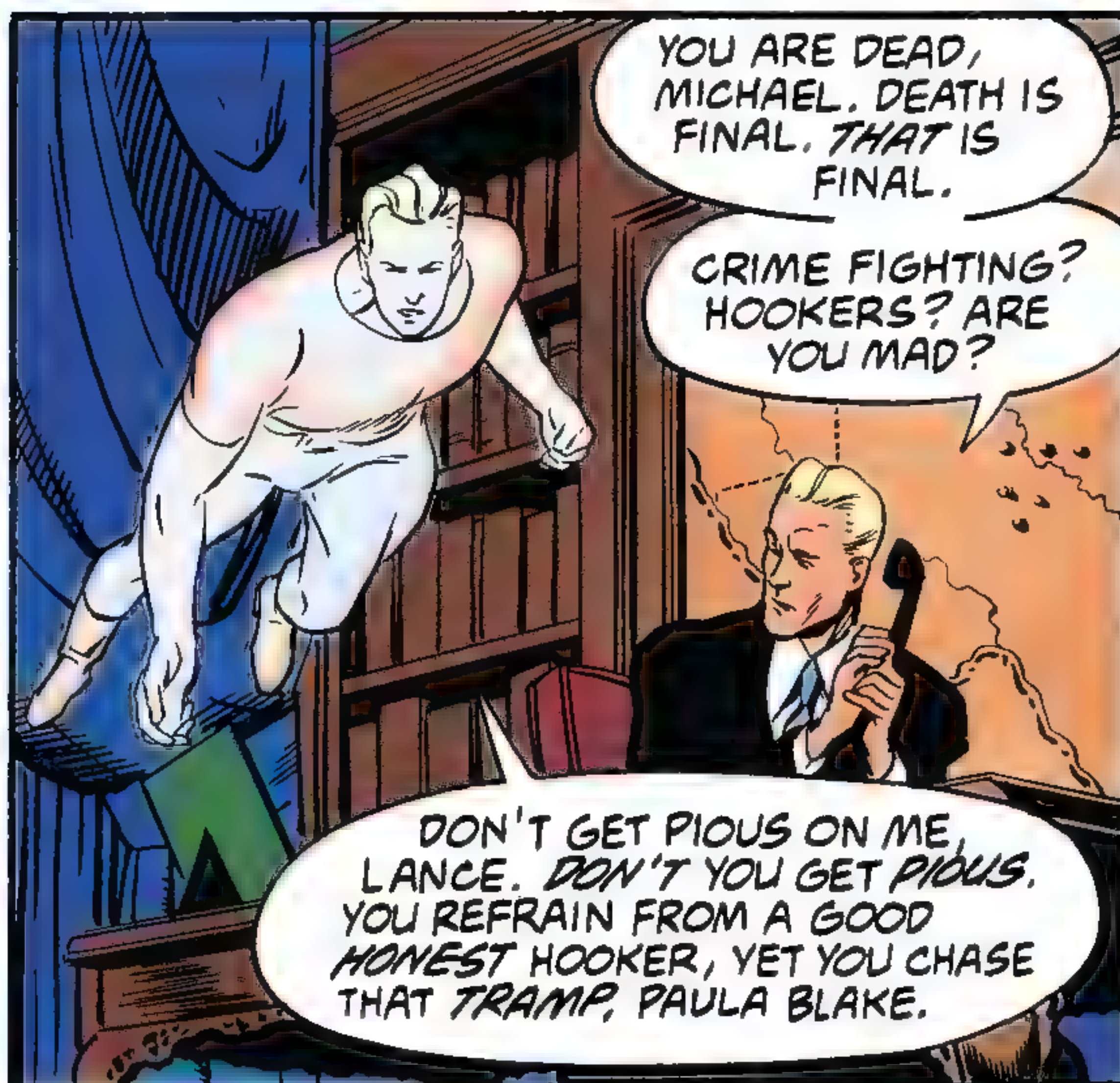
The door to her trailer was thrown open by her, with a force that only passion and longing can bring. That, and the hope that this figure, this hulking male form, was Hank's. The heat of the morn was as dry and burning as all the mornings that week. She noticed that fact no more than her broken lipstick





JUST FOR AN HOUR. THAT'S ALL I'M ASKING.

WE BECOME CAPTAIN TRIUMPH, FIGHT SOME CRIME... THEN MAYBE HIRE A HOOKER OR--



YOU ARE DEAD, MICHAEL. DEATH IS FINAL. THAT IS FINAL.

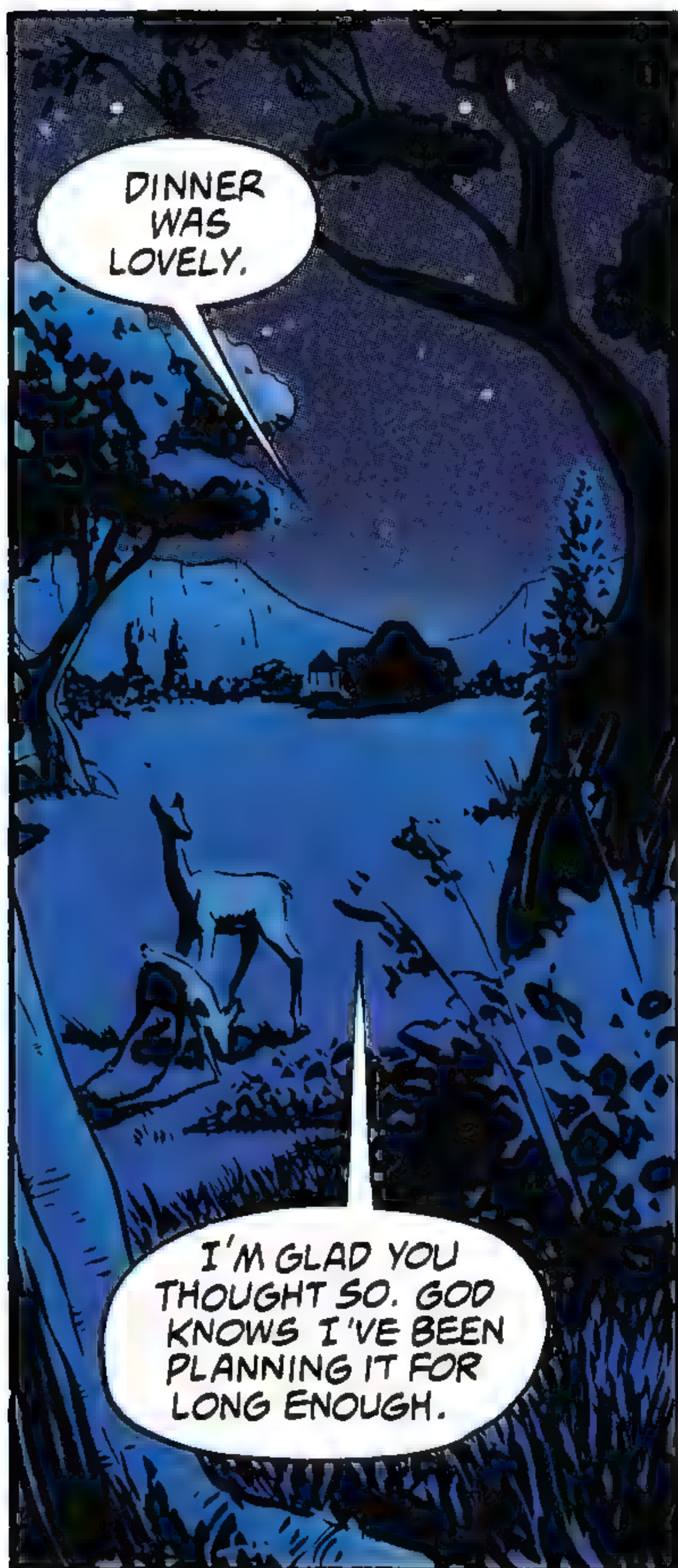
CRIME FIGHTING? HOOKERS? ARE YOU MAD?

DON'T GET PIOUS ON ME, LANCE. DON'T YOU GET PIOUS. YOU REFRAIN FROM A GOOD HONEST HOOKER, YET YOU CHASE THAT TRAMP, PAULA BLAKE.



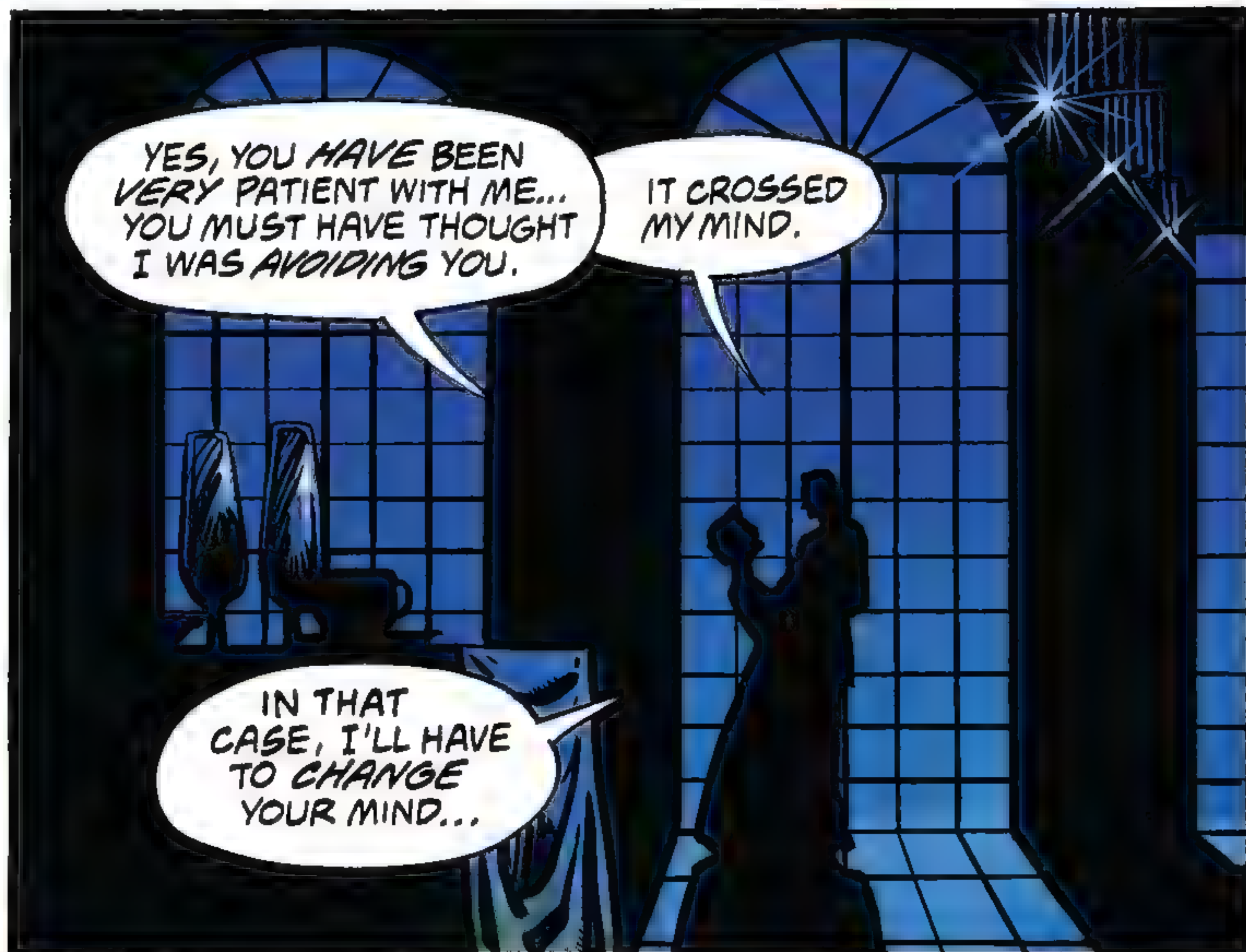
DON'T YOU EVEN SPEAK HER NAME, YOU FILTHY SPOOK.

SOMETIMES I WISH YOU WERE ALIVE, SO I COULD KILL YOU!



DINNER WAS LOVELY.

I'M GLAD YOU THOUGHT SO. GOD KNOWS I'VE BEEN PLANNING IT FOR LONG ENOUGH.



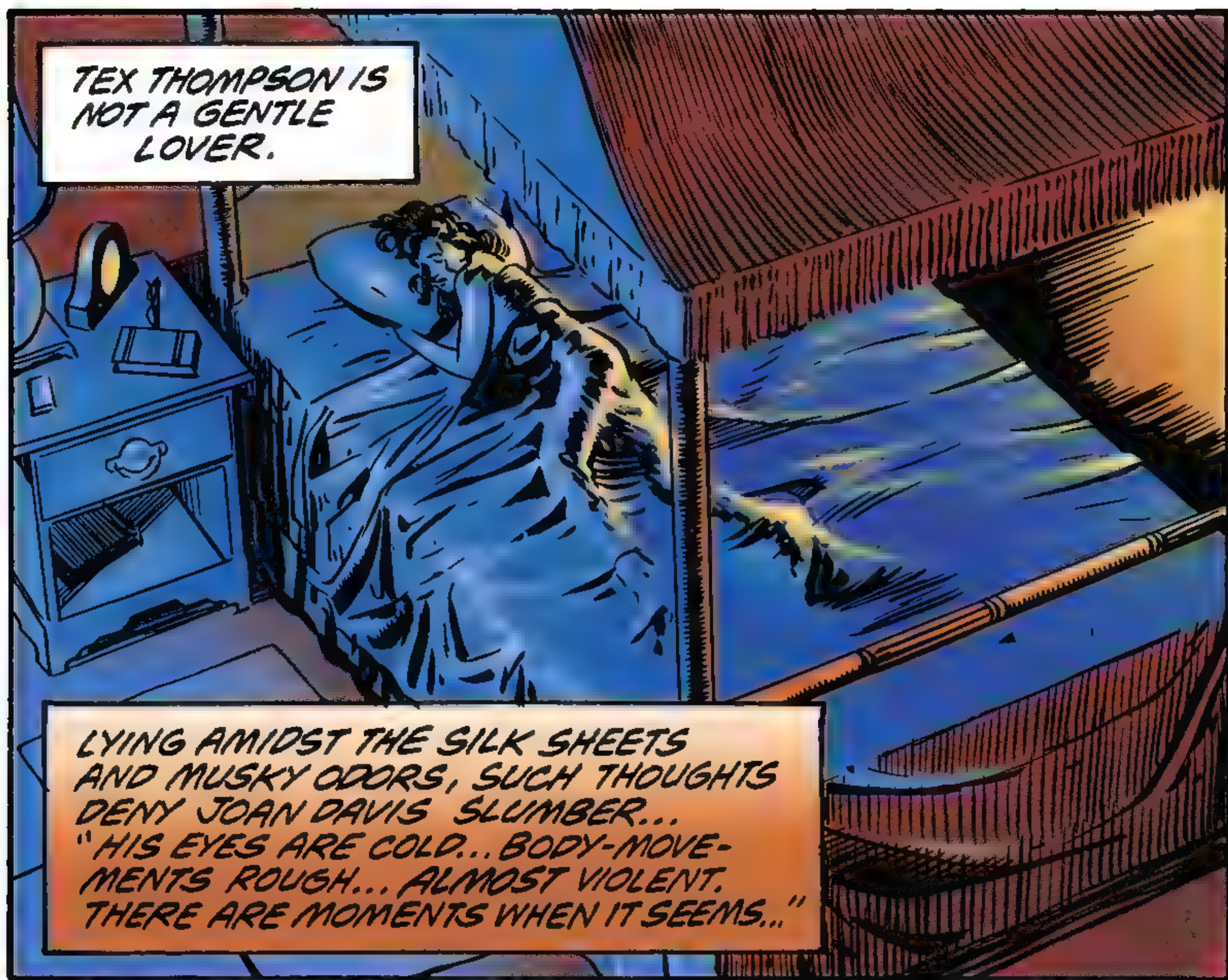
YES, YOU HAVE BEEN VERY PATIENT WITH ME... YOU MUST HAVE THOUGHT I WAS AVOIDING YOU.

IT CROSSED MY MIND.

IN THAT CASE, I'LL HAVE TO CHANGE YOUR MIND...

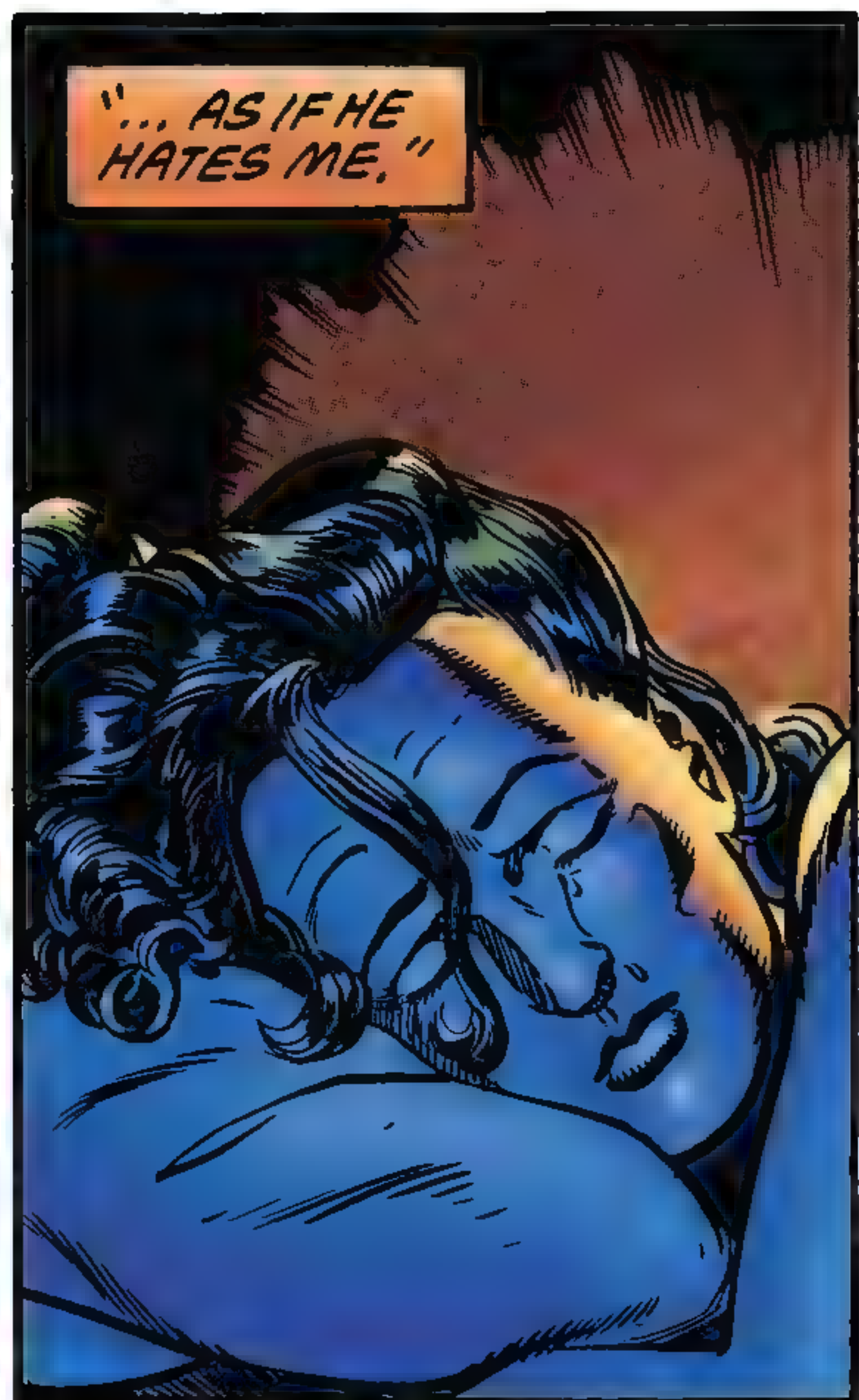


...NOW THAT WE'RE ALONE.



TEX THOMPSON IS NOT A GENTLE LOVER.

LYING AMIDST THE SILK SHEETS AND MUSKY ODORS, SUCH THOUGHTS DENY JOAN DAVIS SLUMBER... "HIS EYES ARE COLD... BODY-MOVEMENTS ROUGH... ALMOST VIOLENT. THERE ARE MOMENTS WHEN IT SEEMS..."

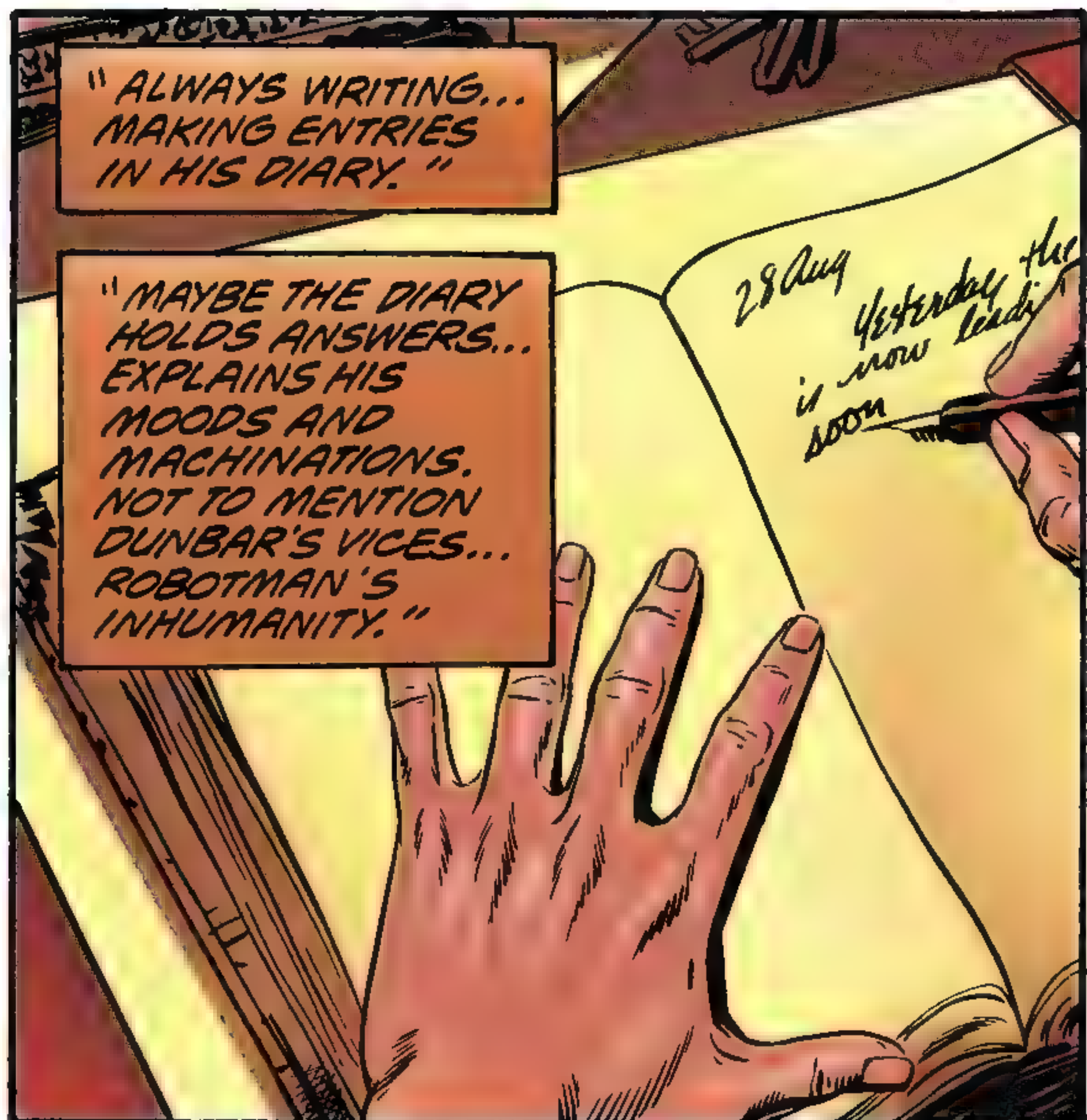


"... AS IF HE HATES ME."



"NO, HE LOVES ME... HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT."

"AND I LOVE HIM, DON'T I? IT'S NOT JUST HIS POWER... IT'S NOT. I WANT TO BE MRS. AMERICA FOR THE RIGHT REASONS."



"ALWAYS WRITING... MAKING ENTRIES IN HIS DIARY."

"MAYBE THE DIARY HOLDS ANSWERS... EXPLAINS HIS MOODS AND MACHINATIONS. NOT TO MENTION DUNBAR'S VICES... ROBOTMAN'S INHUMANITY."

28 Aug Yesterday the is now leads soon



"TO FULLY LOVE TEX, I HAVE TO FULLY UNDERSTAND HIM, DON'T I? IF I LOOKED IN THE DIARY, MAYBE I--"

"NO, PRYING WOULD BE WRONG... DISTRUSTING..."

"... UNAMERICAN."



GREAT FATHER!
DARK LORD!

YOU WHO ARE MY INSPIRATION.

HEHEHEHEHEH... BUT OHHH, YOU ARE A RASCAL.



I THOUGHT IT WAS OVER FOR ME... MY LIFE AND PLANS. AND YOU LET ME THINK IT.

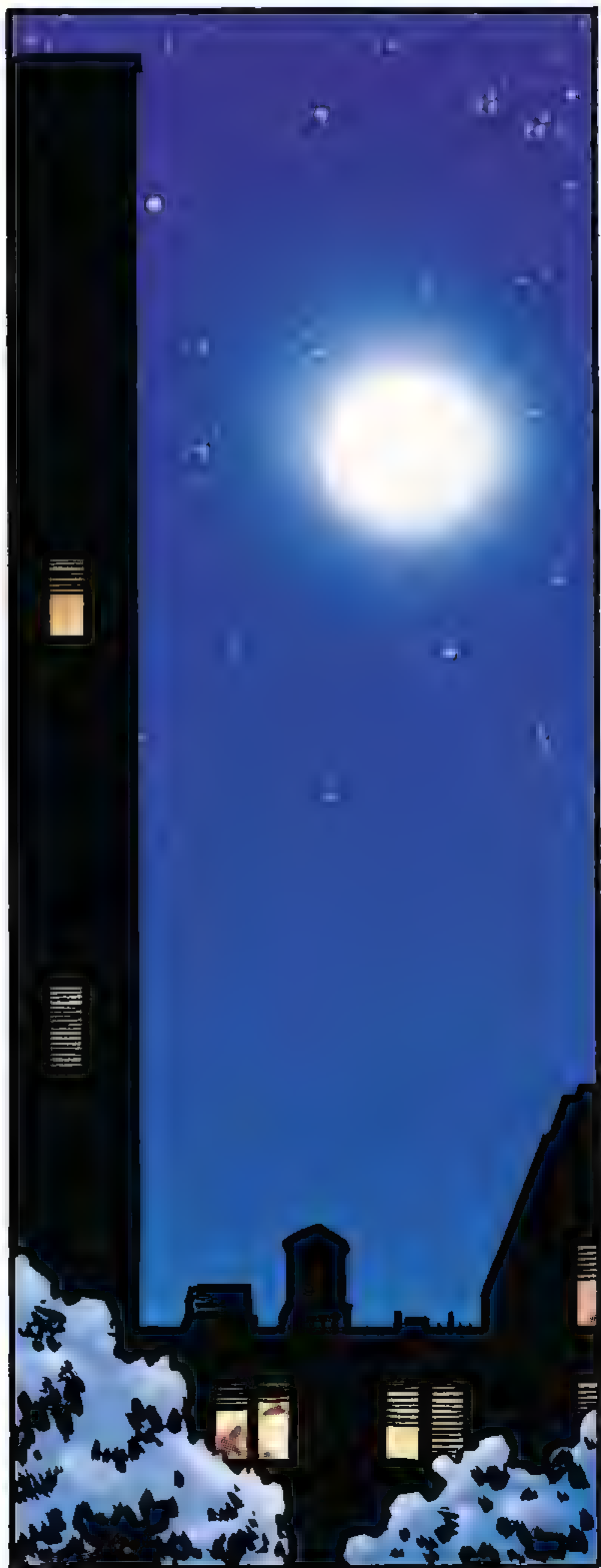
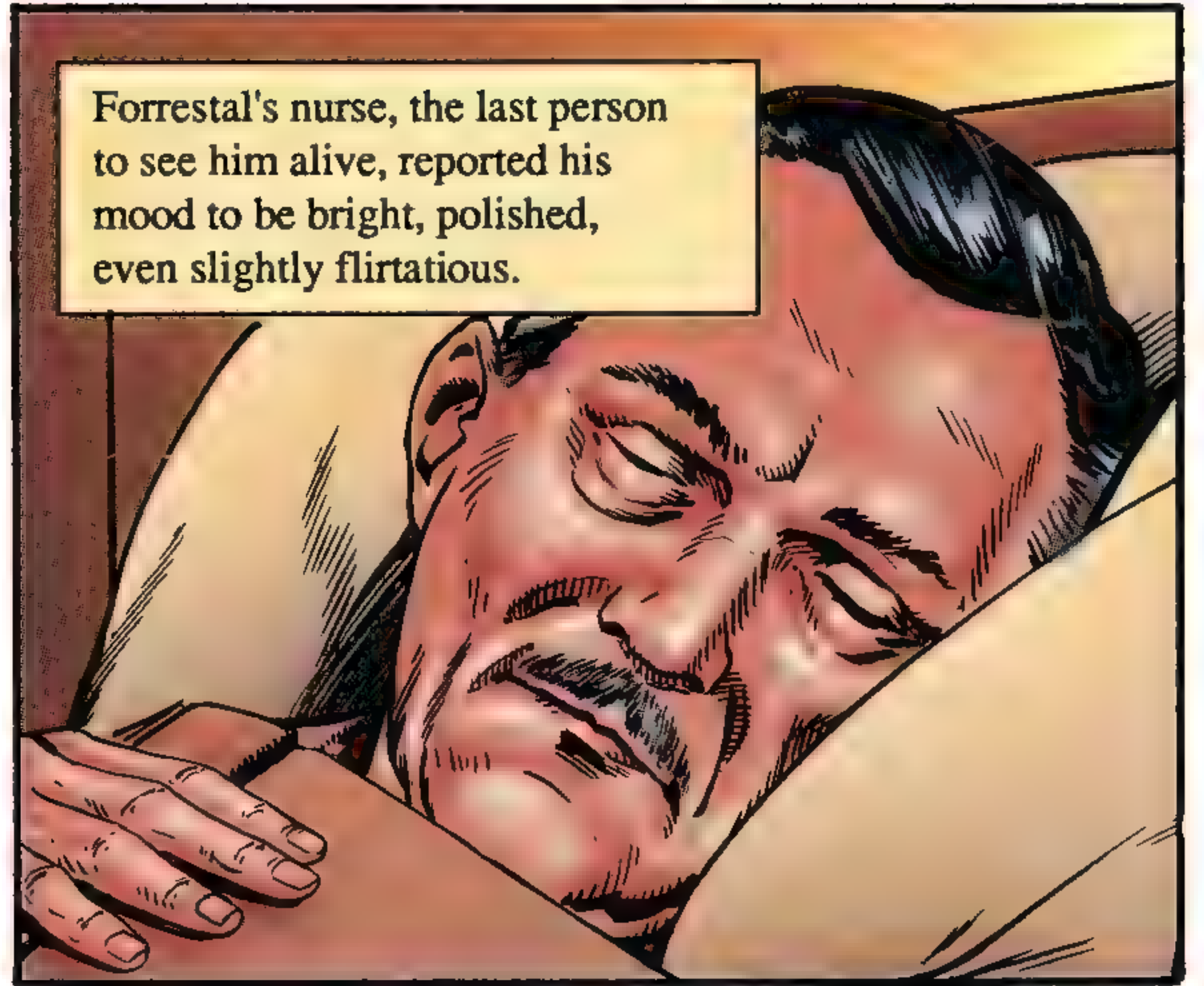
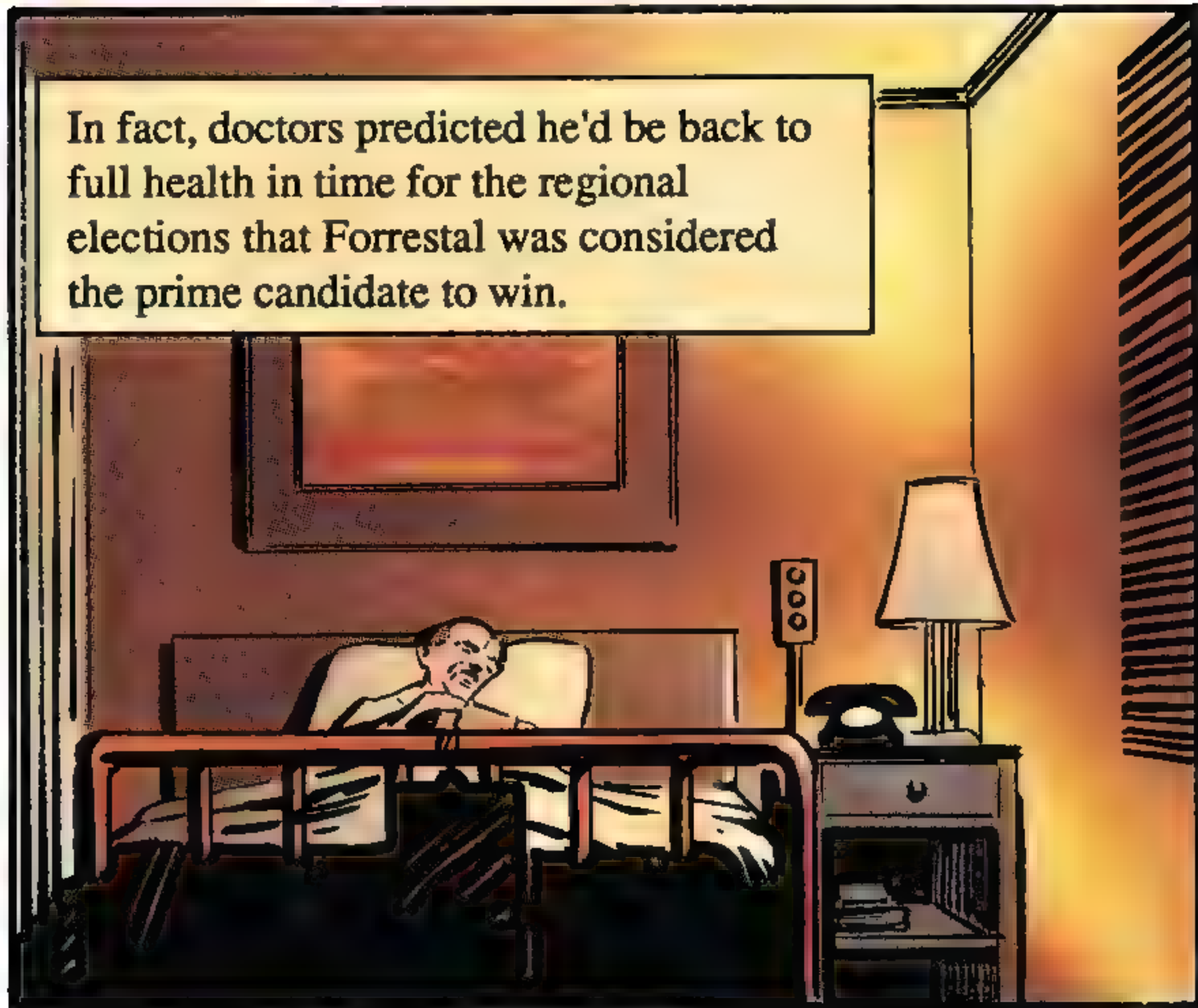


I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND... WHY YOU'D FORSAKEN ME... WHY IT WAS OVER.

HOW COULD I HAVE KNOWN...



...IT WAS ONLY JUST BEGINNING.





*For 58 minutes the
Miracle Pill's powers
have lasted.*



*Tests of strength
and sense
enhancement.*

*All tests
passed.*



All but one.



*Fear hits me...
like that other
time... for the
barest of instants.*

*That last time
had been enough
to cause night-
marish, perception-
distorting
hallucinations.*

This time...

*I covered my eyes...
dreading the failure
as much as the
visions I might see.*





I'M SERIOUS, LIBBY. IT'S TIME YOU QUIT THAT JOB OF YOURS. TIME TO GET MARRIED... HAVE KIDS.

ANYWAY, I DON'T LIKE YOU WORKING. IT'S NOT RIGHT.

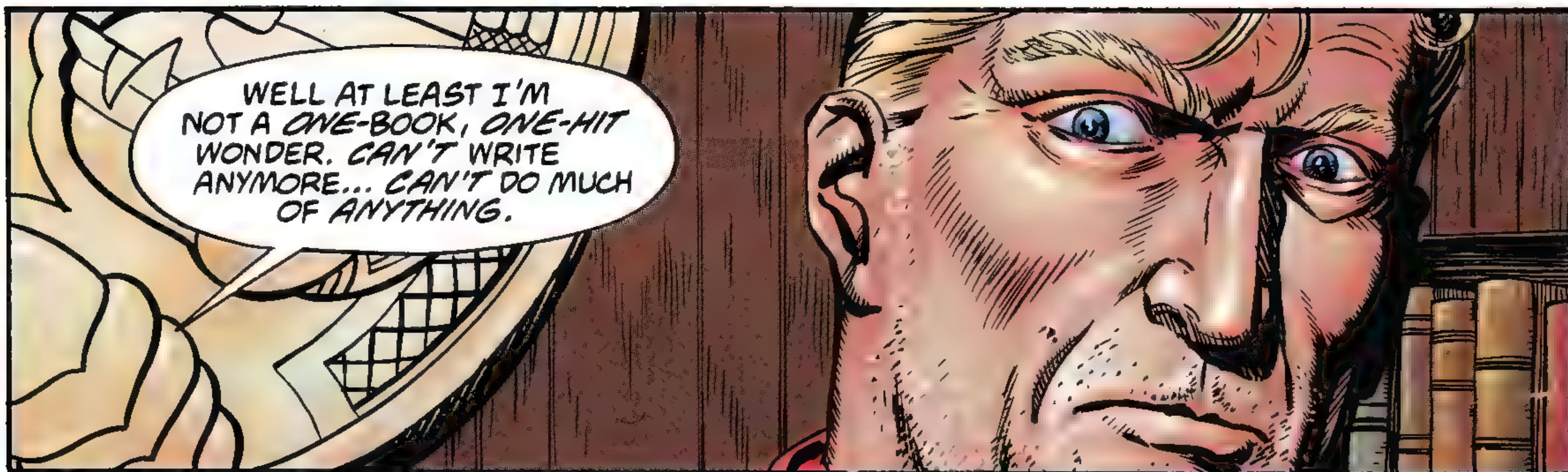
BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE HAPPY FOR ME... MY NEW LIFE.



AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE OLD ONE... WITH ME? ALL OF A SUDDEN IT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH?

LISTEN TO ME, GIRL. YOU'RE GETTING OLD... YOU'LL BE THIRTY SOON. WHAT SUCCESS COULD POSSIBLY LIE AHEAD FOR YOU?

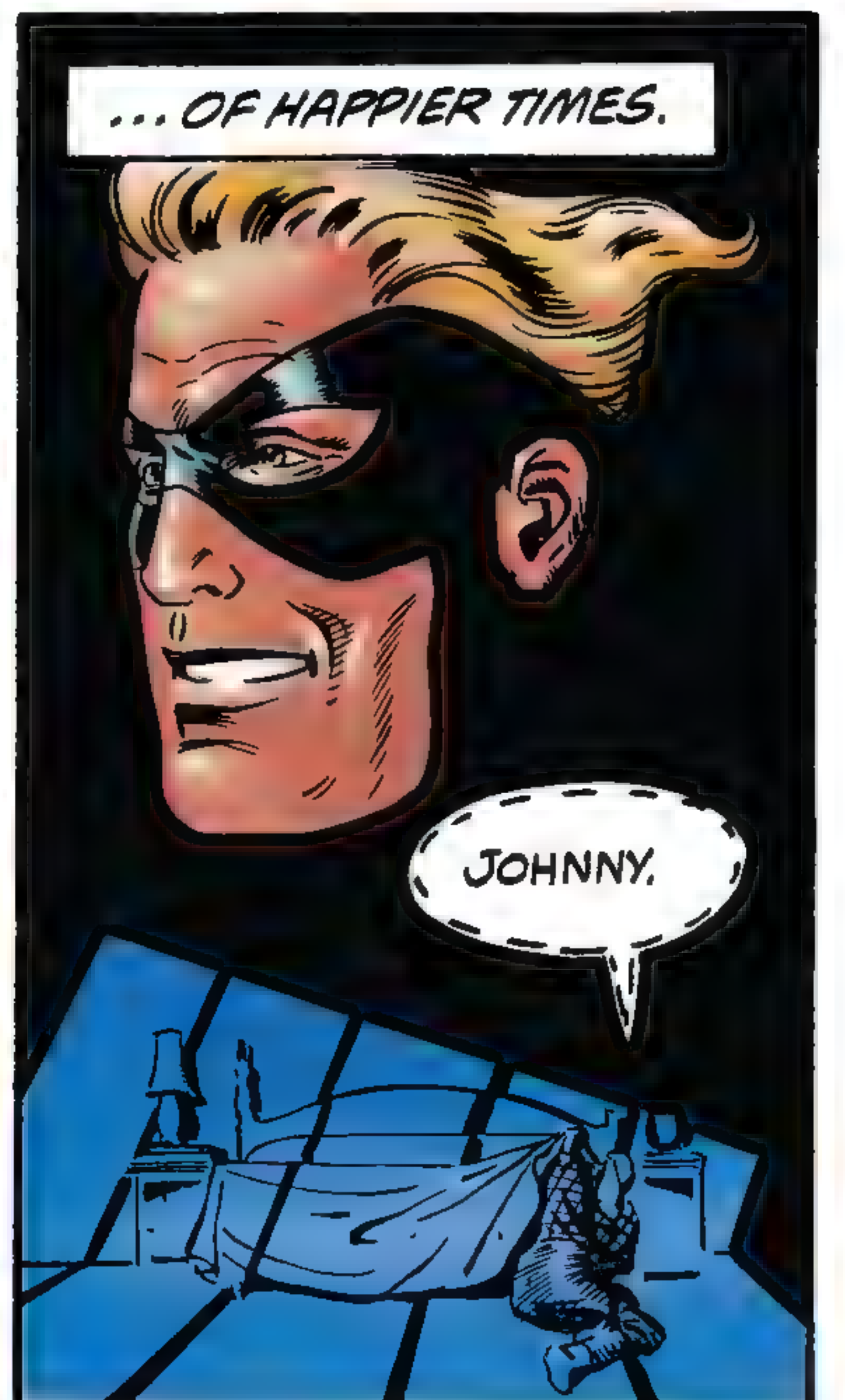
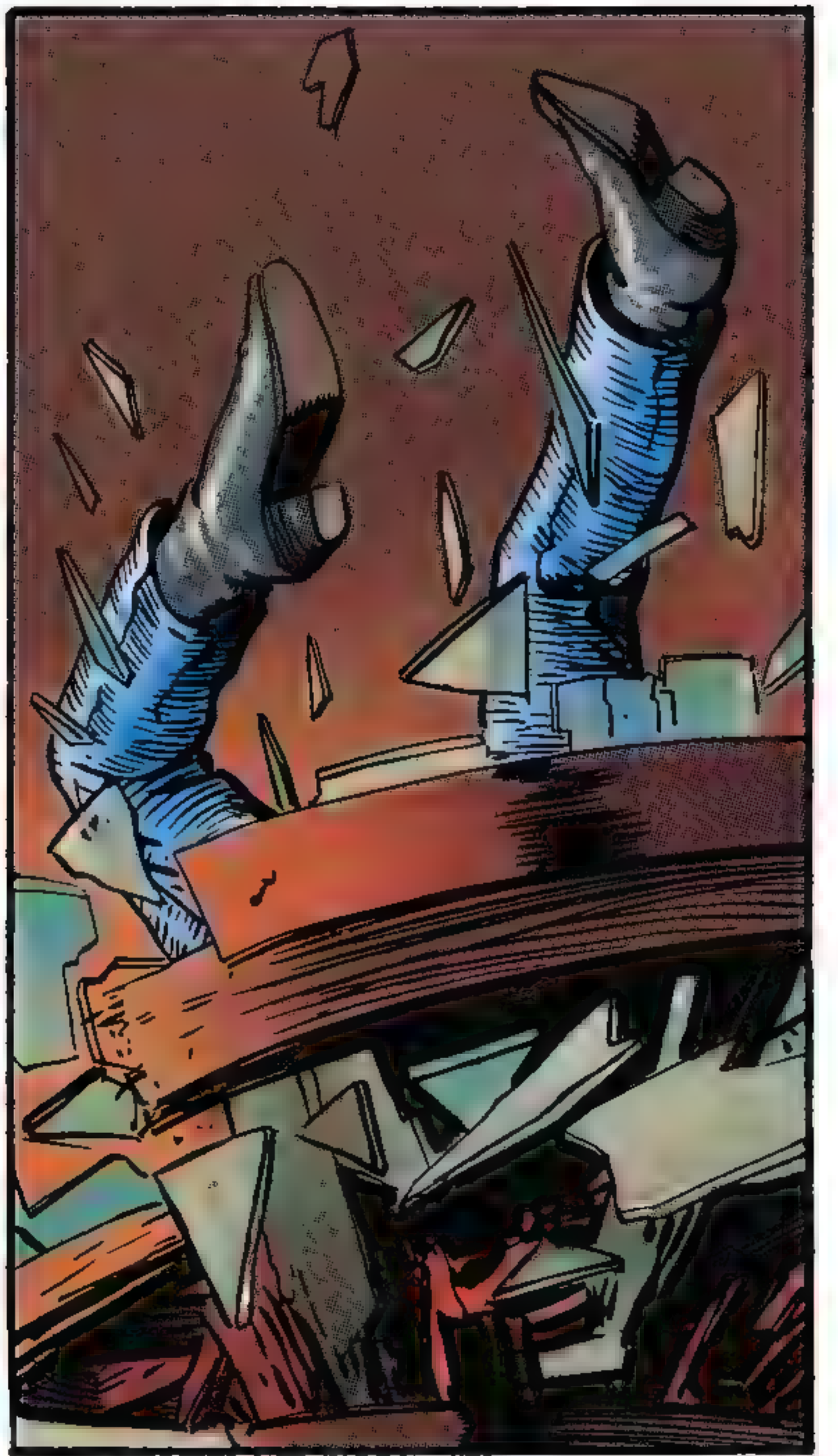
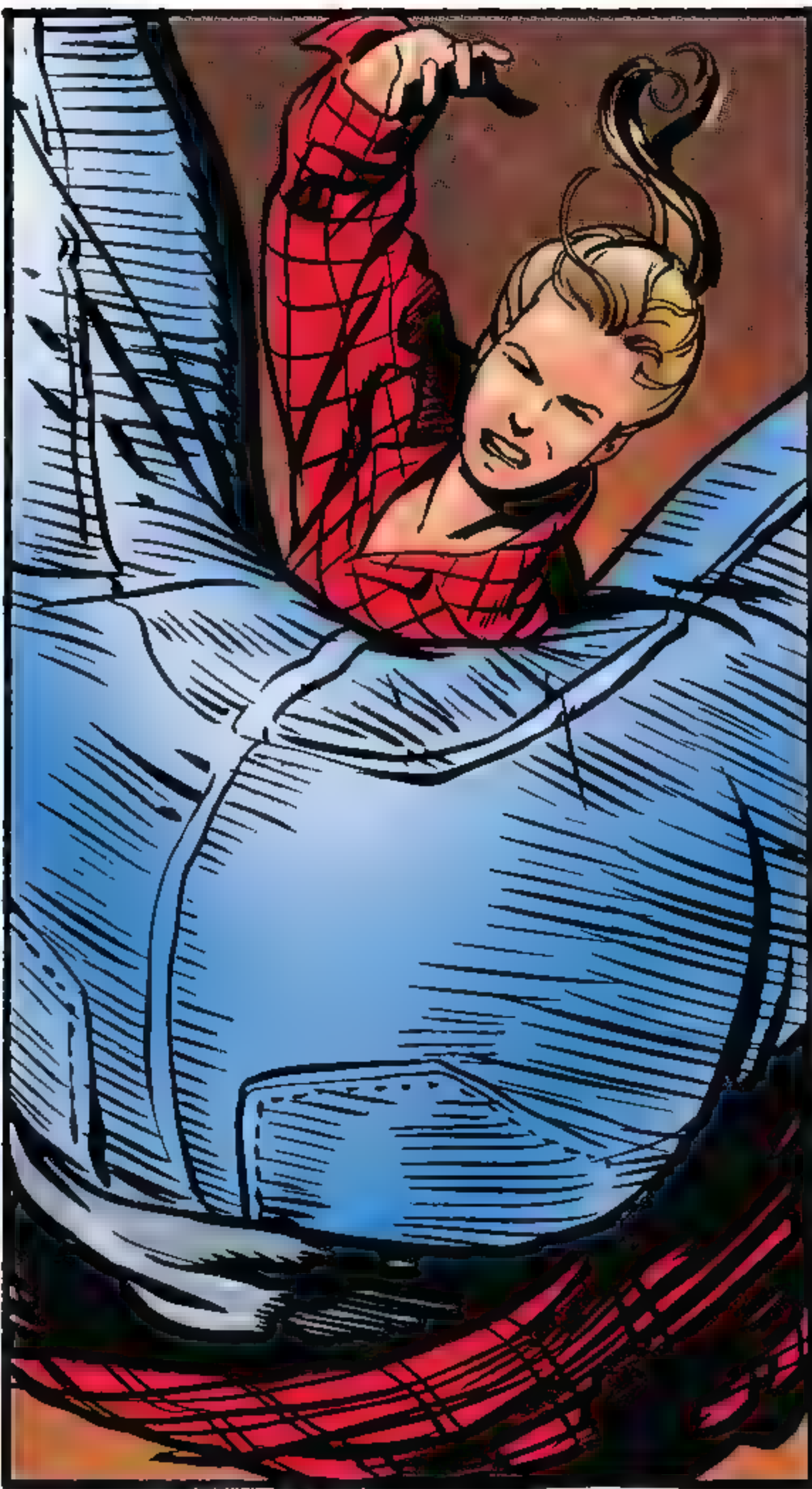
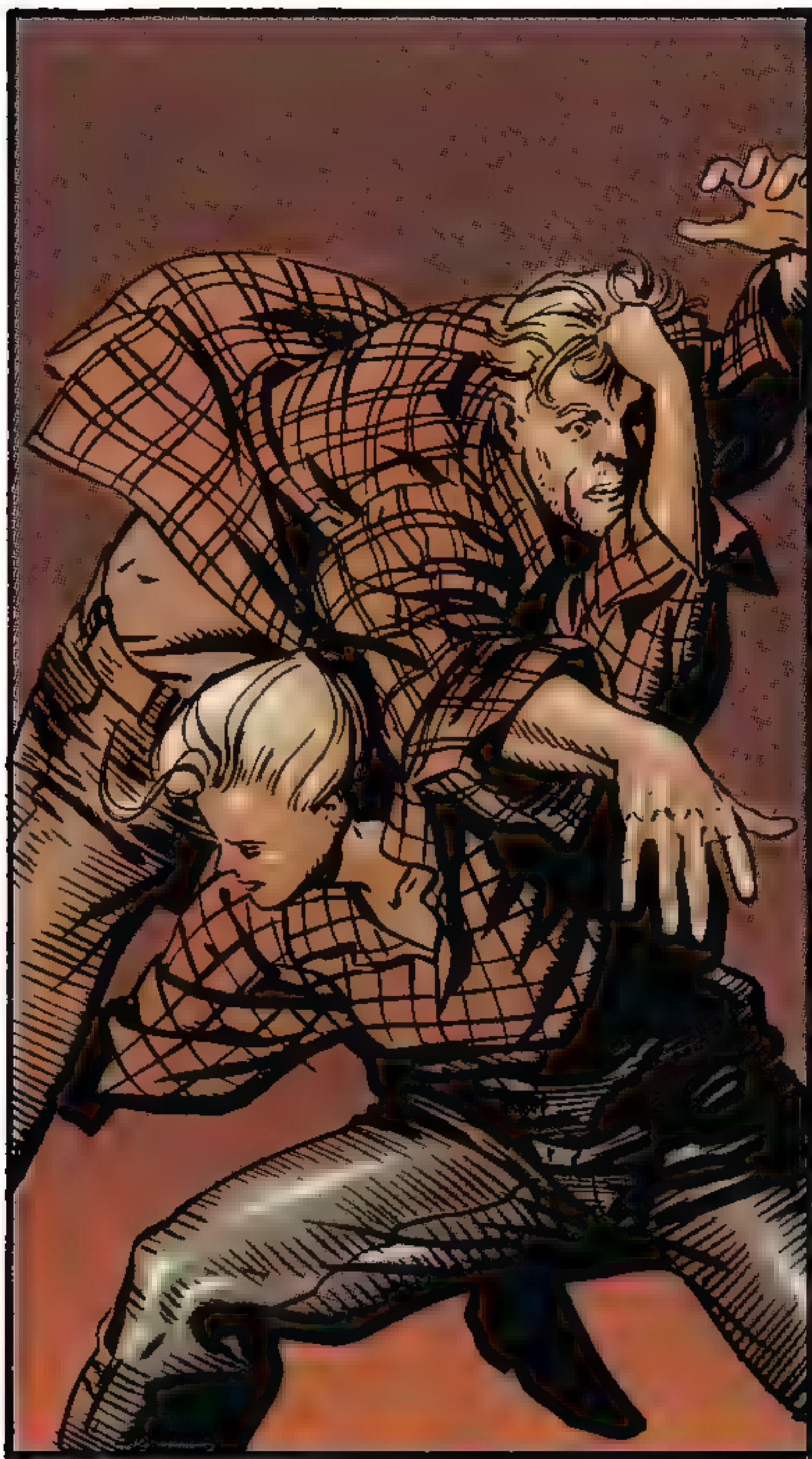
OLD?... I'M OLD?!

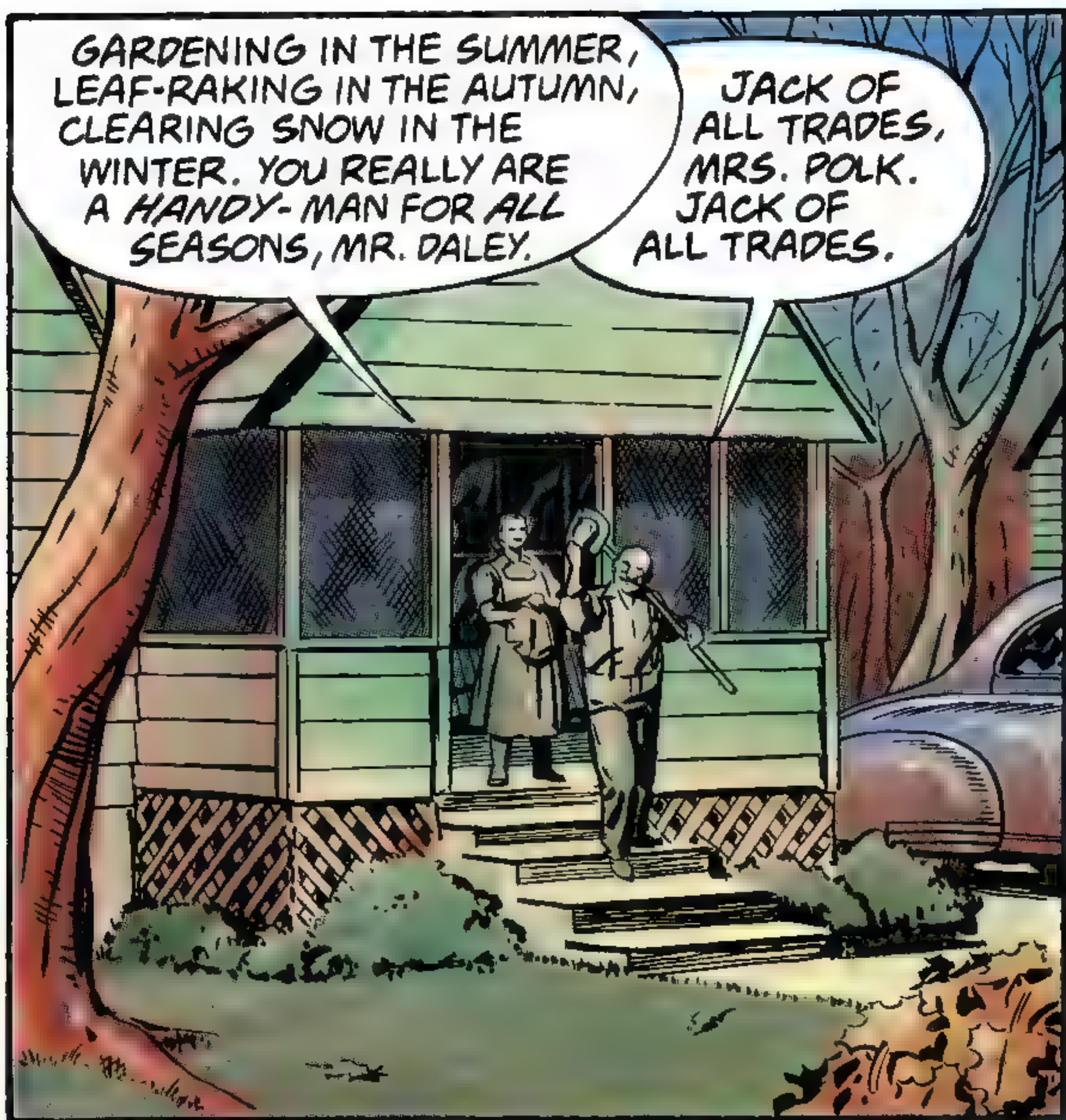


WELL AT LEAST I'M NOT A ONE-BOOK, ONE-HIT WONDER. CAN'T WRITE ANYMORE... CAN'T DO MUCH OF ANYTHING.



YOU BITCH! YOU... WON'T LOOK SO SWEET ON TELEVISION WHEN I'M THROUGH WITH YOU.





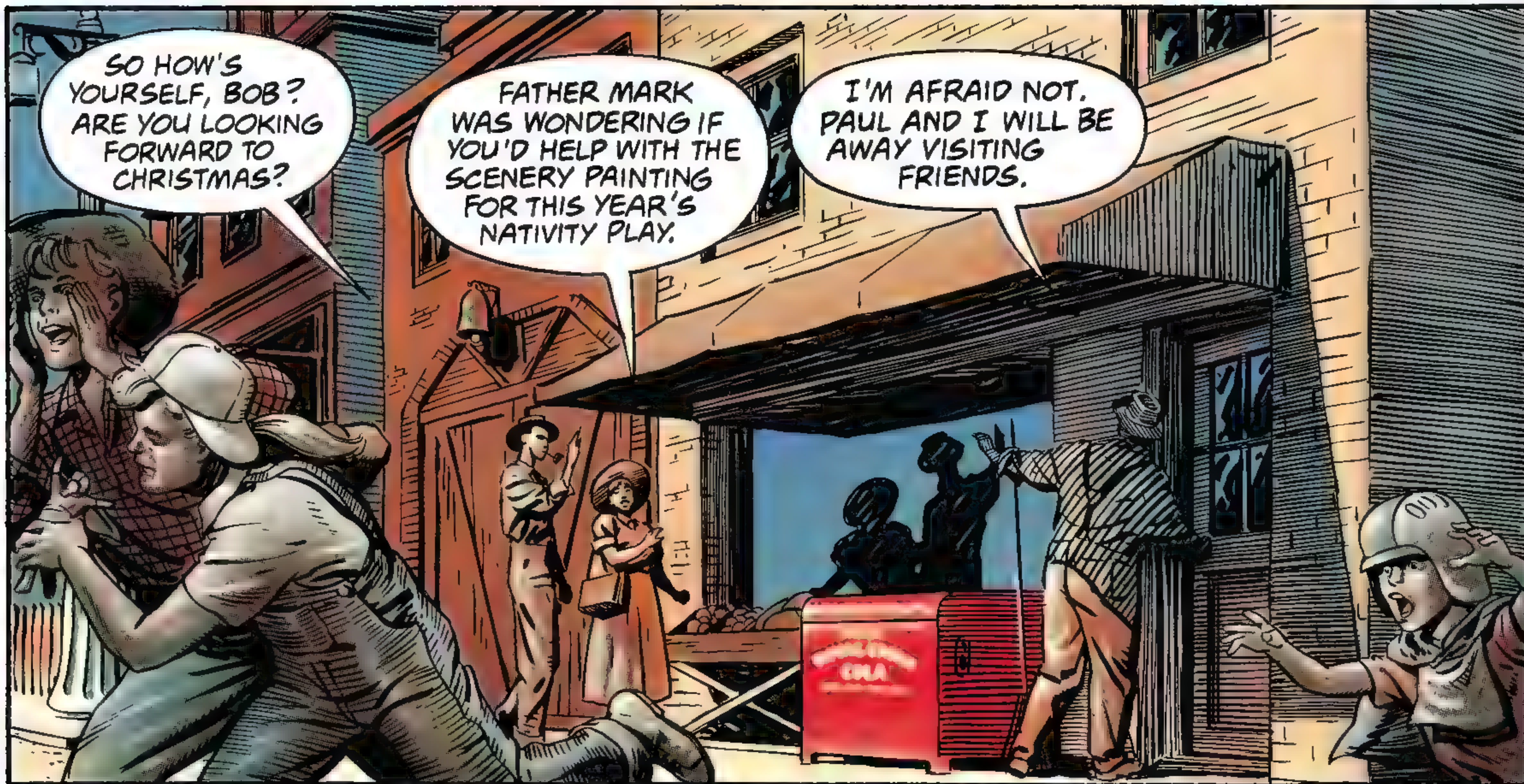
GARDENING IN THE SUMMER,
LEAF-RAKING IN THE AUTUMN,
CLEARING SNOW IN THE
WINTER. YOU REALLY ARE
A HANDY-MAN FOR ALL
SEASONS, MR. DALEY.

JACK OF
ALL TRADES,
MRS. POLK.
JACK OF
ALL TRADES.



A YEAR SPENT IN COLBY...
A SMALL MID-WESTERN
TOWN, FILLED WITH
WARM HUMANITY.

I'LL
MISS THIS
PLACE.



SO HOW'S
YOURSELF, BOB?
ARE YOU LOOKING
FORWARD TO
CHRISTMAS?

FATHER MARK
WAS WONDERING IF
YOU'D HELP WITH THE
SCENERY PAINTING
FOR THIS YEAR'S
NATIVITY PLAY.

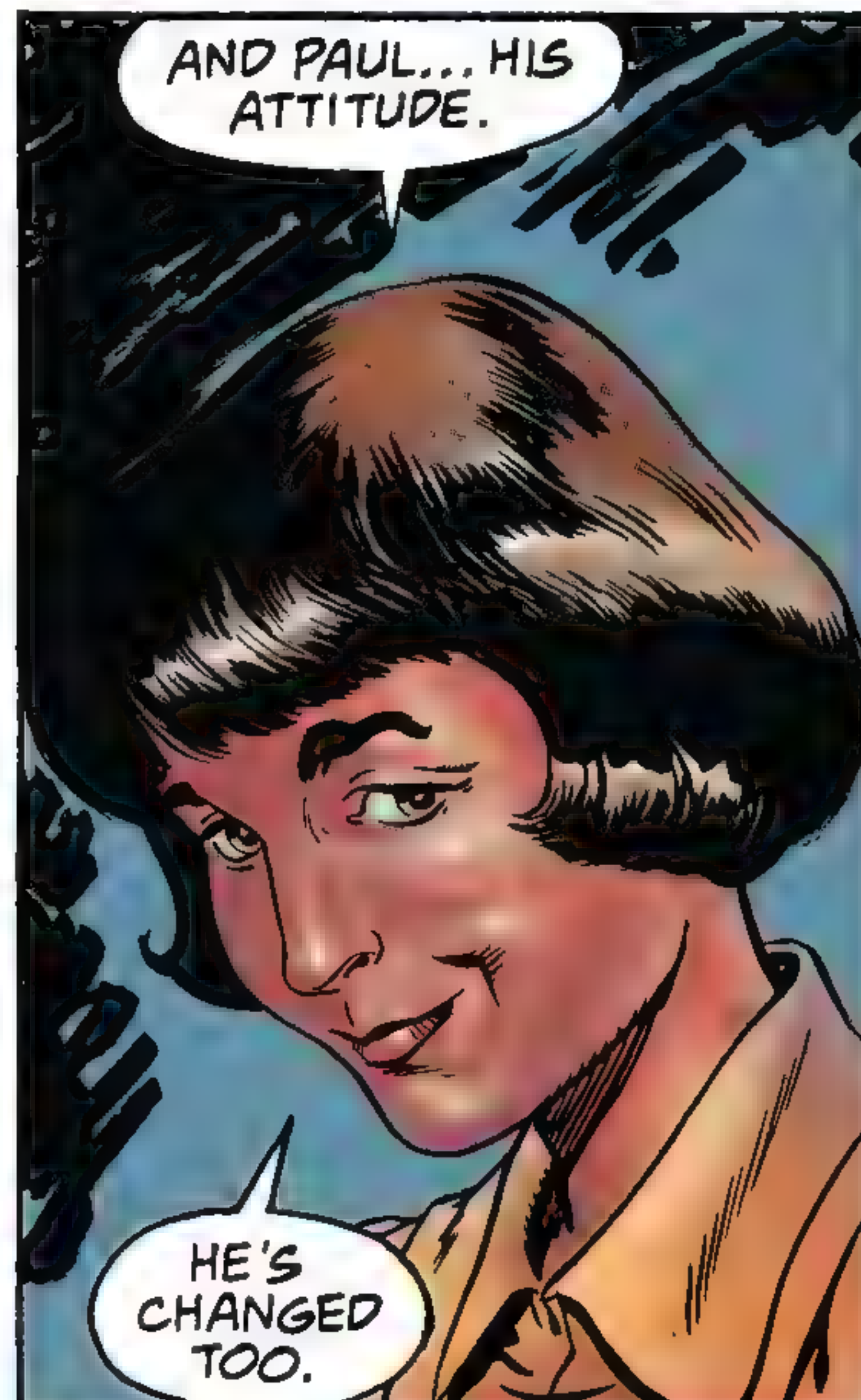
I'M AFRAID NOT.
PAUL AND I WILL BE
AWAY VISITING
FRIENDS.



DID I HEAR YOU RIGHT, BOB...
YOU'RE LEAVING COLBY? YOU'LL
BE COMING BACK, I HOPE.

I HOPE SO, YES. I
LIKE THIS TOWN. I
LIKE HOW YOU MADE
US WELCOME.

WELL,
THE TOWN
SEEMS TO
AGREE WITH YOU BOTH.
YOU LOST SOME
OF THE WEIGHT
YOU ARRIVED
WITH...



AND PAUL... HIS
ATTITUDE.

HE'S
CHANGED
TOO.



run.

run

never stop.

lungs ache...
lungs burn... but
never stop.

run.



save the
eagle.

don't let them have
it... don't let them
kill it.

the fear's no
less... it hasn't
changed.

it still oozes from your
pores, tastes bitter-sharp
on your tongue.



what has
changed...

...is that you're fighting it.

save the eagle.

save it.

save--

n...no...

nnooooohhhh!!





UUUHH!

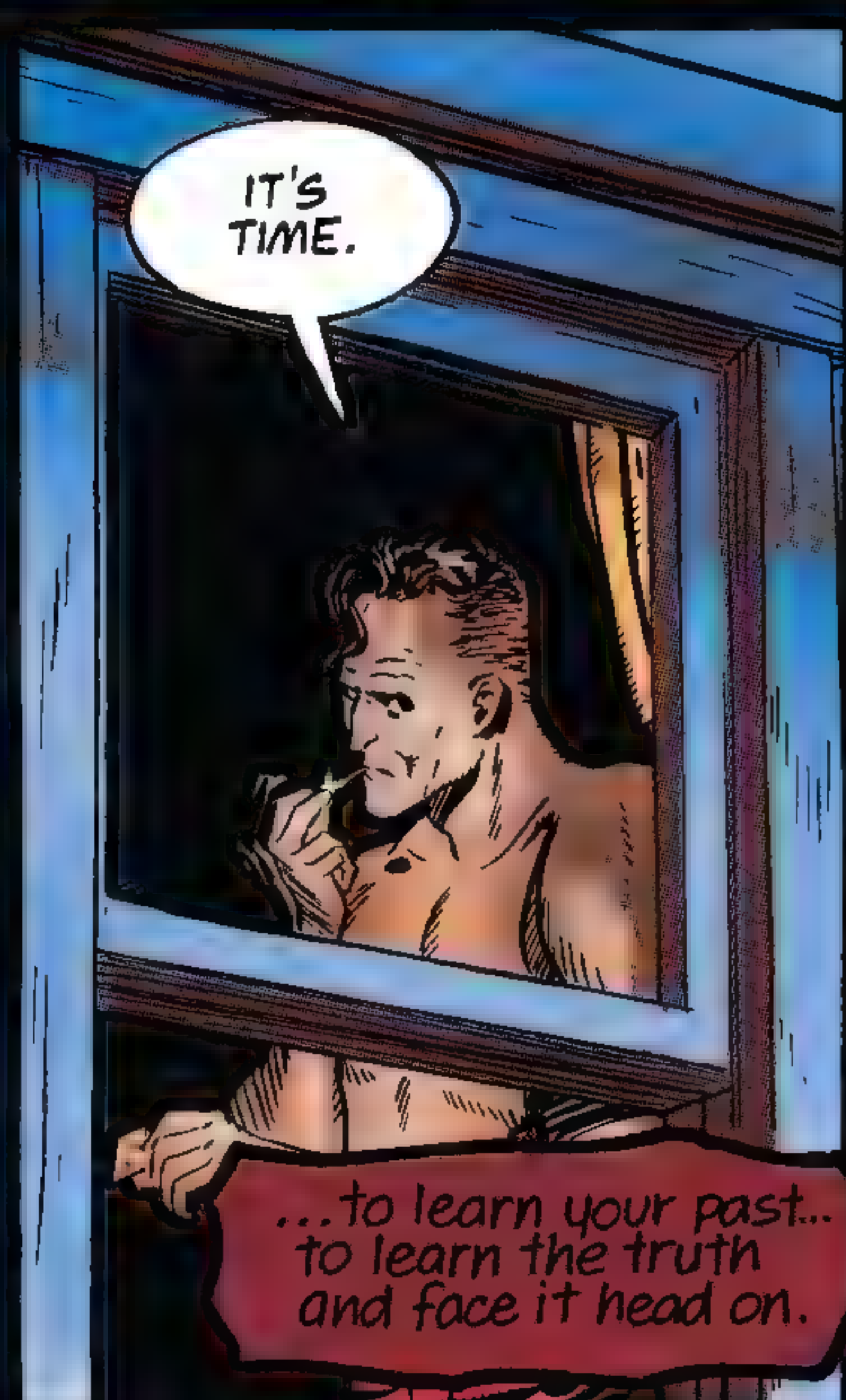


still afraid.

part of you... that you're not... that you can't listen to.

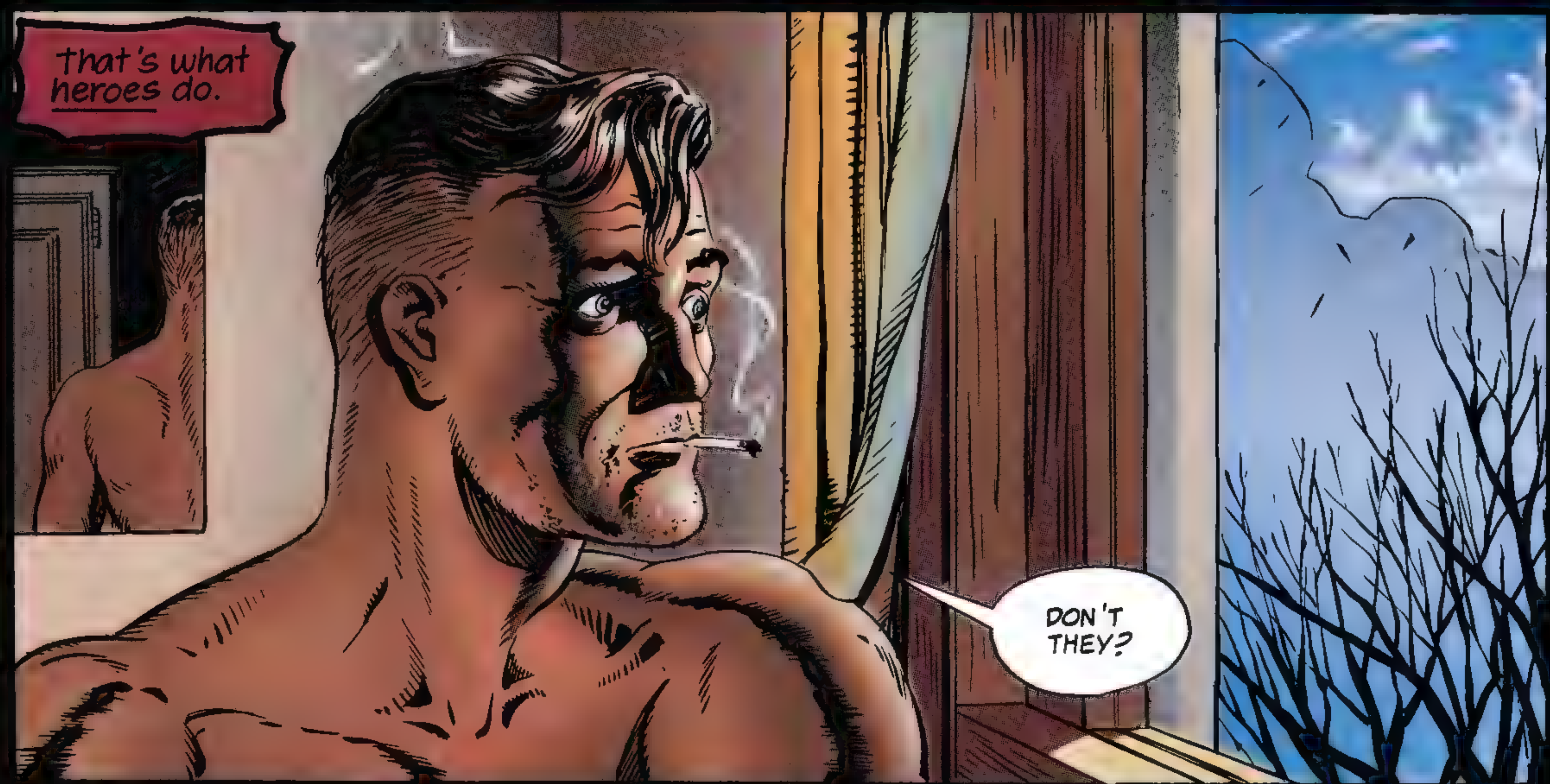


part of you wants to crawl off to the darkest, safest part of colby...hide away forever.



IT'S TIME.

...to learn your past... to learn the truth and face it head on.



that's what heroes do.

DON'T THEY?



ONE THING I DO REMEMBER...IS HOW MUCH I HATE NEW YORK.

I HOPE HE'S EXPECTING US.

DON'T WORRY, I CALLED AND EXPLAINED IT ALL.

HE REMEMBERS YOU, TOO. NOT WELL, THOUGH. YOU WERE NEVER CLOSE, AFTER ALL.



HOPE THE YEAR IN COLBY, THIS YEAR OF WAITING, WAS WORTH IT. WAITING FOR HIM TO RETURN TO AMERICA.



HIS STUDIES IN HYPNOTISM... USING IT TO LEARN ABOUT HIS OWN PAST LIVES...IT'S JUST THE THING FOR YOU. HELP YOU TO PULL BACK THE CURTAIN OF YOUR MEMORY... LET THE LIGHT IN.



I HOPE.

GEEZ, PAUL... I SAID TRUST ME, BACK WHEN WE MET, DIDN'T I? SO TRUST M--



OH BOY.





GREETINGS,
GENTLEMEN.
GREETINGS!

I HOPE MY
DWELLING AND APPEARANCE
AREN'T TOO ALARMING.

DISCOVERING ONE'S
ROOTS CAN BE UNSETTLING...
FOR THOSE OTHER THAN THE
ONE DOING THE DISCOVERING.

IF YOU DON'T RECALL
ME, PAUL, THEN I
SUPPOSE REINTRO-
DUCTIONS ARE IN
ORDER.

I AM
CARTER
HALL.



YOU'RE
SURE THIS
WILL WORK?



YOU... WERE
HAWKMAN?

YES...
ONCE, A
LIFETIME
AGO.

OH YES. MEMORY IS
MERELY A DOOR...
WHICH SOMETIMES
BECOMES LOCKED.

IN
WHICH
CASE
HYPNOTISM
IS THE
KEY.



NOW WATCH
THE AMULET...
WATCH IT
SWING...



"...AND
REMEMBER!"

Paul Kirk...until now I knew--
remembered-- that was my
name. but little else. didn't
know who he... who I was...
who I really
was.

Now I do.

Paul Kirk, the playboy. Paul
Kirk, the adventurer, the
big game hunter. God, what
a carefree life I had.

Especially when I
was with Tex
Thompson.

This was before Bob Daley's
time... when Tex and I would
paint the town, and stain
the African plains, red. We
were inseparable, me and
Tex.

Did everything together.
Him, a few years older,
like a guiding hand... an
elder brother.

commitments arose,
as the years went by.
We drifted apart some,
but stayed in touch.

One day he revealed to
me he'd become a
mysteryman, Mr. America.
Maybe it was subcon-
scious... his guiding hand
still working...

But within a year
I'd followed suit.

A couple of times
we went out... did
the crimefighting
thing together.

Those were the
best... the golden
times



DAILY PLEASANT EUROPE

DATE: _____

CIRCULATION: 100,000

WAR RAVAGES

Then one day... Tex disappeared.

I hadn't been seeing much of him before then, anyway, yet... I don't know... something was missing after that. The friendly competition between us... the fact that he was out there on the streets somewhere, like me.

After that, fighting criminals began to feel petty, small... compared to the war.

So... one parachute and a few bribes later, I was in Europe.

Kept the Manhunter tag... became my code-name. The rest of it-- the mask and the costume --stayed stateside. This was war, after all, not fancy dress.

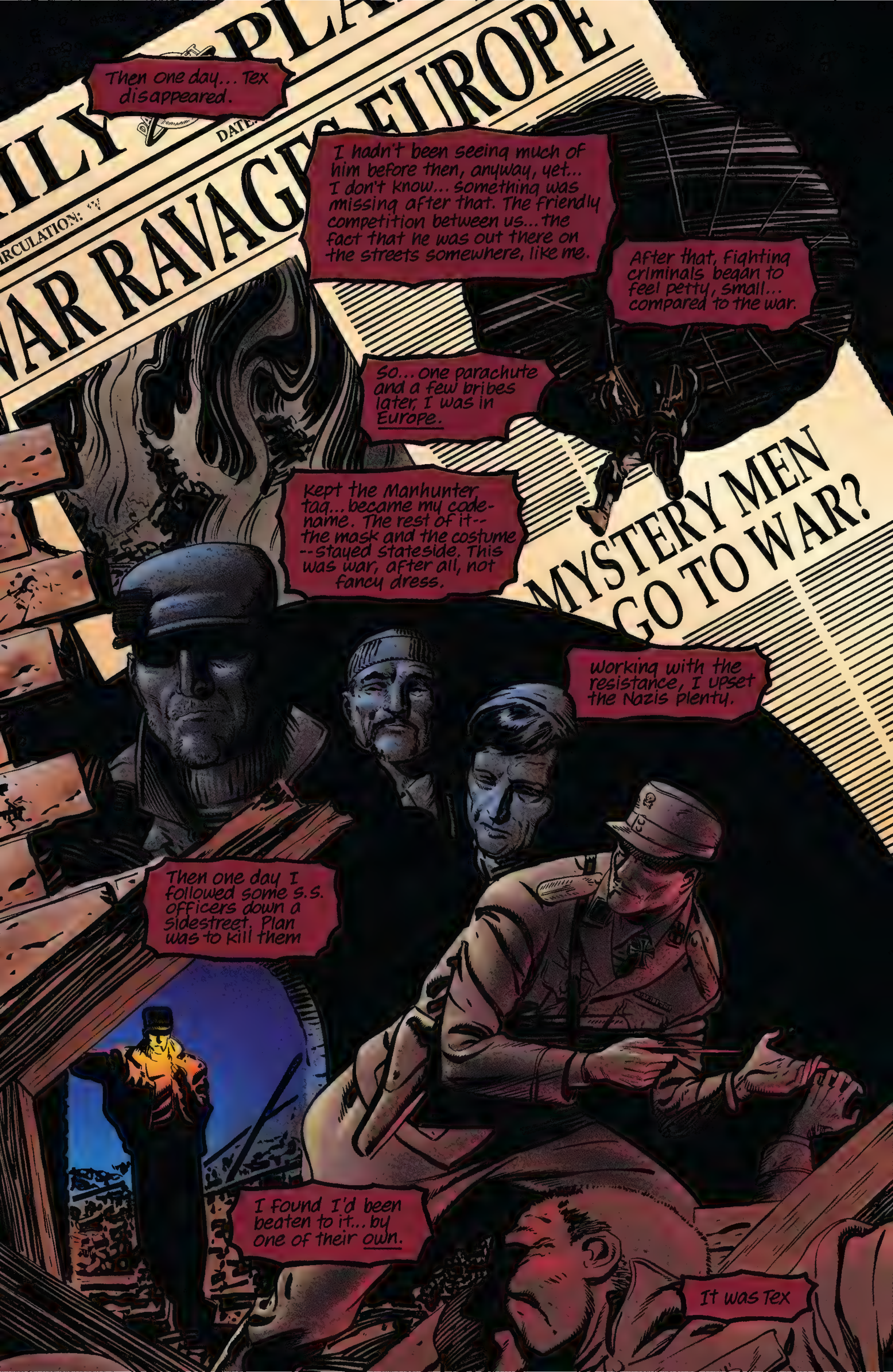
MYSTERY MEN GO TO WAR?

Working with the resistance, I upset the Nazis plenty.

Then one day I followed some S.S. officers down a side street. Plan was to kill them

I found I'd been beaten to it... by one of their own.

It was Tex



Knowing Tex was out there on the European streets...from then on, I'm ashamed to admit, the war became a bit of a game. Like those early days as a crime-fighter.

Sometimes Tex and I worked as a team. Our most famous stunt was credited solely to him, but we worked together...

...Killing all of the enemy's superhumans.

Sure, it was Tex who forged the orders, summoning them all to that chateau. But it was me who went in and wired the place...blew it to Valhalla.

I killed Parsifal, too. Hitler's secret weapon...his "knight" and defender...who'd kept the allied super-heroes at bay.

He was a little runt of a man with bad breath and a worse complexion.

Somehow, the credit for that went to Tex as well, but in the last couple of weeks of war, I was too busy killing generals and destroying defenses to keep count or to care.

Hitler was holed up somewhere, awaiting the end... American troops were just outside Berlin. I figured it would all be over soon, and who did what and got what glory could get sorted out then.

A...and then...

"YES, PAUL?"


And then it happened.

"WHAT? TRY TO REMEMBER. TRY -- YOU MUST!"

I'm scared... scared to... I'm... it was... when...

"WHEN WHAT? WHAT HAPPENED?"

My... world exploded.



I was on the verge of shipping back to America... or pushing on to the Pacific. One or the other.

Then word came to me that one of Hitler's scientists was still at large... and still at work.

I'm not talking rocket scientist. I'm talking the other kind... the kind that used death camp prisoners and P.O.W.s as quinea pigs. I'm talking mad, cruel, foul research.

I'm talking about someone who deserved to die!

Located him... in a Bavarian castle hidden away.

Breached its defenses. My gun was loaded, my knife and my wits were sharp. I was ready...

...for anything except what I saw.

One of those lying on
the tables was
familiar to me.

Vaguely. A memory
of her... her beauty...
famous beauty.

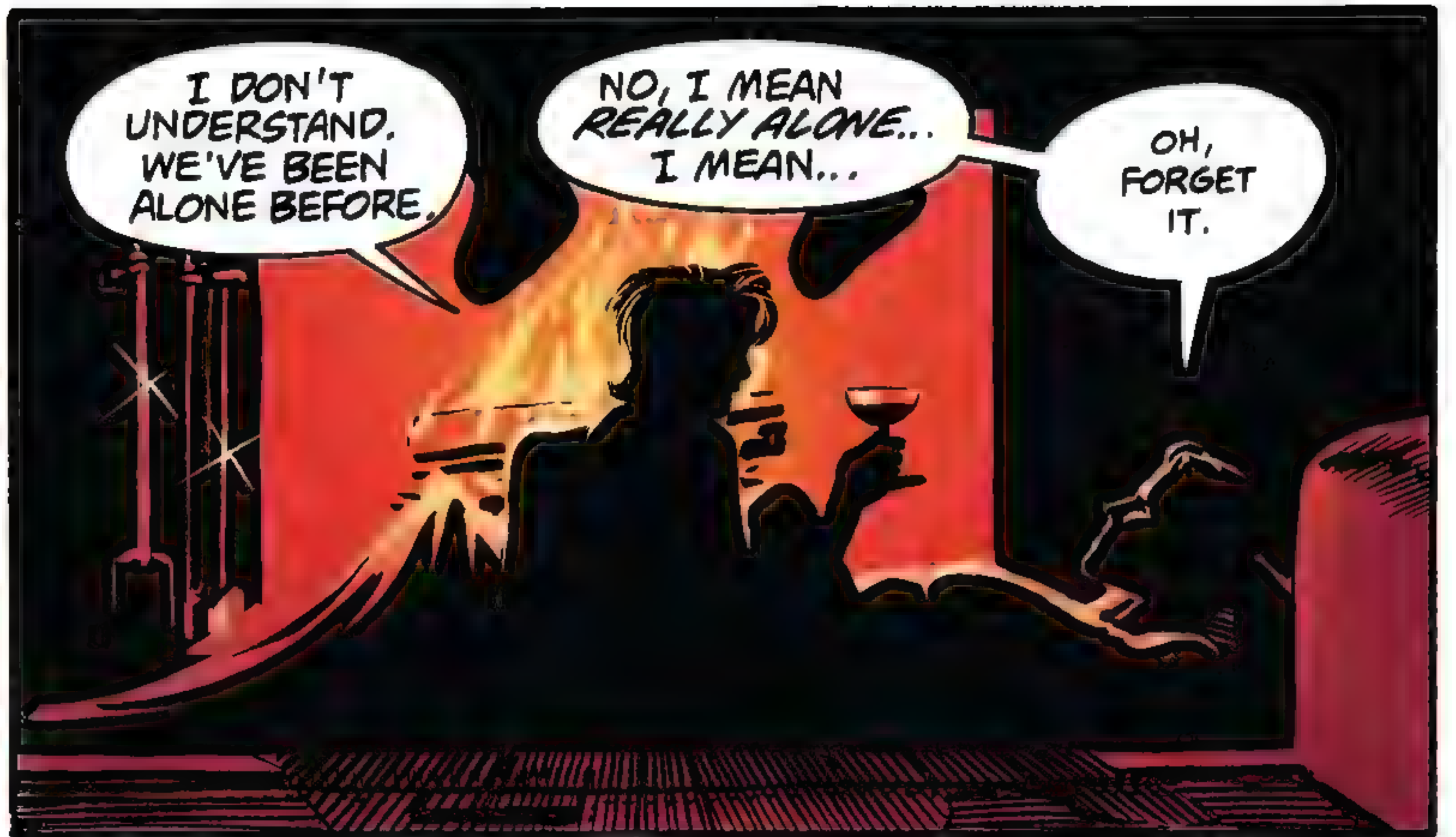
Then I recalled... she
was Delores Winters,
a movie actress
from the '30s.

She vanished
in '38.

My blood turned to
ice when I remem-
bered why.

And when I saw that
Tex was lying next
to her.







IT'S MY LIFE WITH TEX. IT'S GETTING STRANGE.

HE'S GOTTEN STRANGE.



HE TALKS IN HIS SLEEP.. MUMBLES STUFF I CAN'T UNDERSTAND. BUT I KNOW HE'S TROUBLED, SO I'M TROUBLED.

HIS DIARY... I THOUGHT IT MIGHT HOLD SOME ANSWERS.



HE FORGOT TO LOCK THE DRAWER HE KEEPS IT IN. BUT THE BOOK ITSELF IS STILL LOCKED.

PLEASE, DON'T BE OFFENDED, BUT AS YOU'VE HAD EXPERIENCE WITH THAT SORT OF THING, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT--



NOW HOLD ON, PAULA. THAT'S INVASION OF PRIVACY.

OH, POOH.

HAND ME A BOBBY PIN.



HEY, THAT'S DELORES WINTERS. SHE WAS--



I KNOW WHO SHE WAS. I REMEMBER.

JESUS.

My plans had always been brilliant. And it was flattering that so many super-heroes regarded me, the Ultra-Humanite, as their arch foe.

yet there lay the problem. I was always falling afoul of some accursed do-gooder... all colored tights and noble heart.

I could see that wasn't going to change... that if I wanted to prosper, I should go someplace the super-heroes weren't

It didn't take a genius to figure out where.

Hitler welcomed me. Dachau became my playground.

And oh the fun I had.

But by '45 it was obvious the game was over. Hitler was praying for a miracle.

Then I was alerted to suspicions surrounding a certain S.S. officer. It was believed he could be a spy.

I took one look, recognized him... and confirmed that he was.

Tex Thompson was going to be more than that, however... he was going to be my escape.

I'd escaped death once. In '42, when I transferred my brain out of my tired old body, and into the lovely young form of Delores.

Brain Transference is like riding a bicycle... once you learn how, you never forget.

Of course, keeping this bike-ride a secret meant silencing a few people along the way...



so shocked...
i was...

the ultra-humanite's brain
had been in delores winters's
body, and now his brain
was in tex.

my friend
was dead.

the ultra-humanite
must have been
the scientist... my
prey.

but with me
hanging there...
my rifle... hard
to aim.

wanted to kill him
before. had to kill
him now.

When i did... i dunno...
maybe it caught the
moonlight... caused a
glimmer. whatever...

... i caught
that monster's
attention.



i looked down.

he looked up.

things looked bad.

after what he'd done to tex, god knows what he'd do to me.

i wasn't going to give him the satisfaction.



i hit my head.
ha!... among
other places.



THE FIR TREE BROKE MY
FALL. I LIMPED AWAY
FROM THE SCENE, BEFORE
THE GERMAN SOLDIERS
COULD FIND ME.

AND INTO
YEARS OF FEAR
AND DISSOLUTION.



WHEN HE COULDN'T FIND
YOUR BODY... WITH YOU KNOWING
HIS SECRET... THAT MEANT THE
ULTRA-HUMANITE *HAD* TO
KEEP LOOKING FOR YOU.

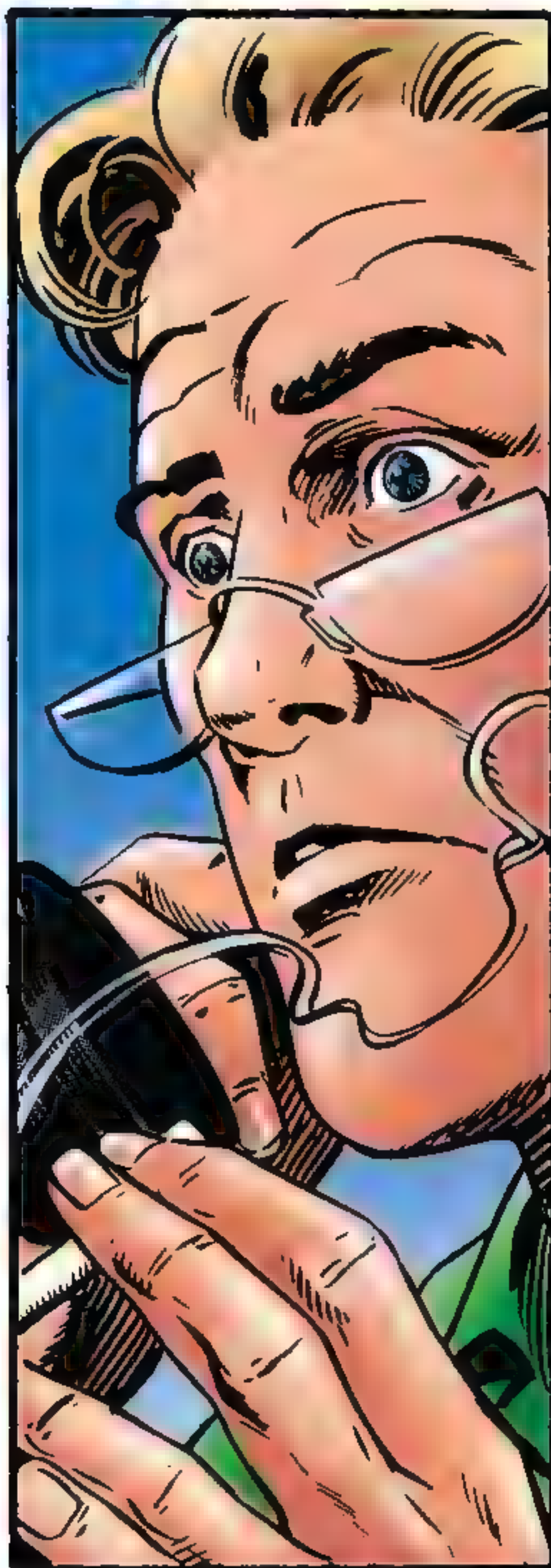
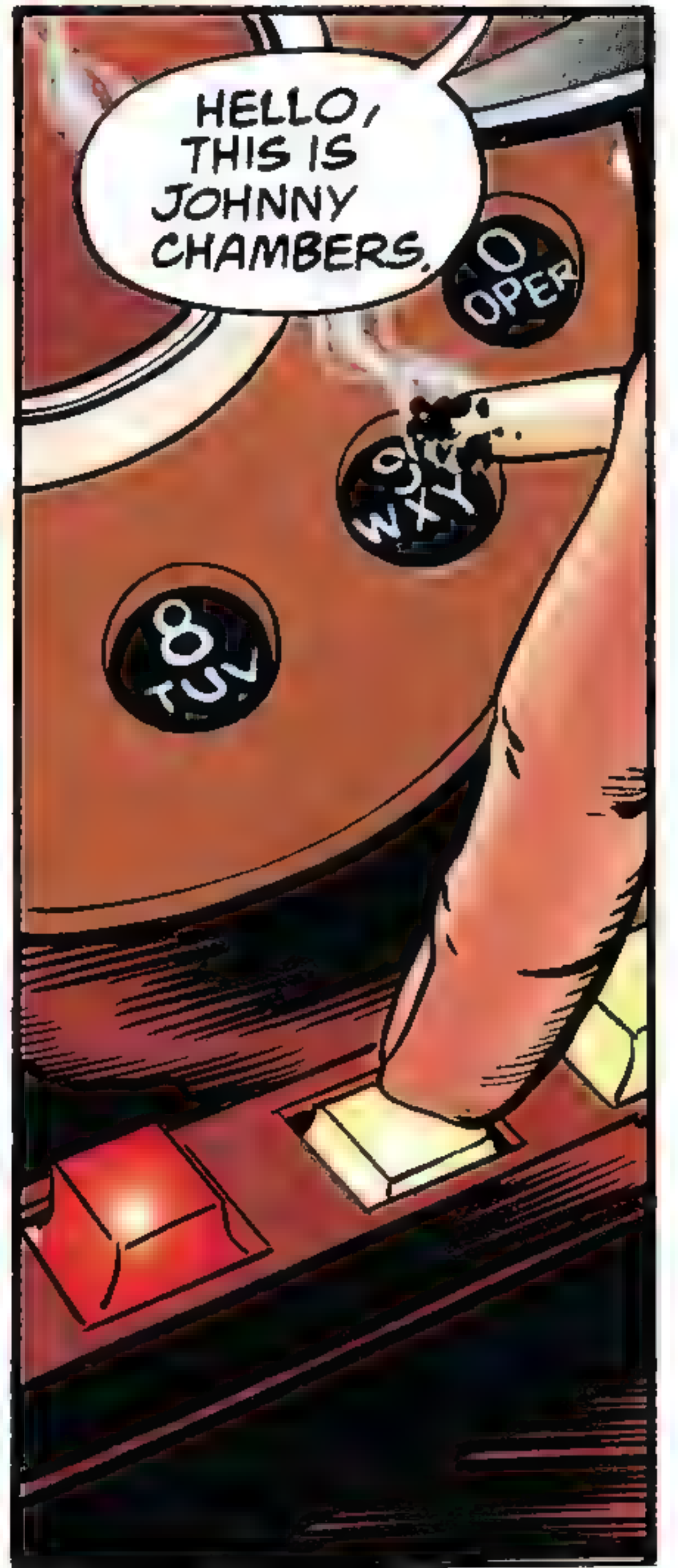
THOSE MEN THAT ATTACKED
US LAST YEAR... THEY
WORKED FOR HIM... THEY
MUST HAVE.

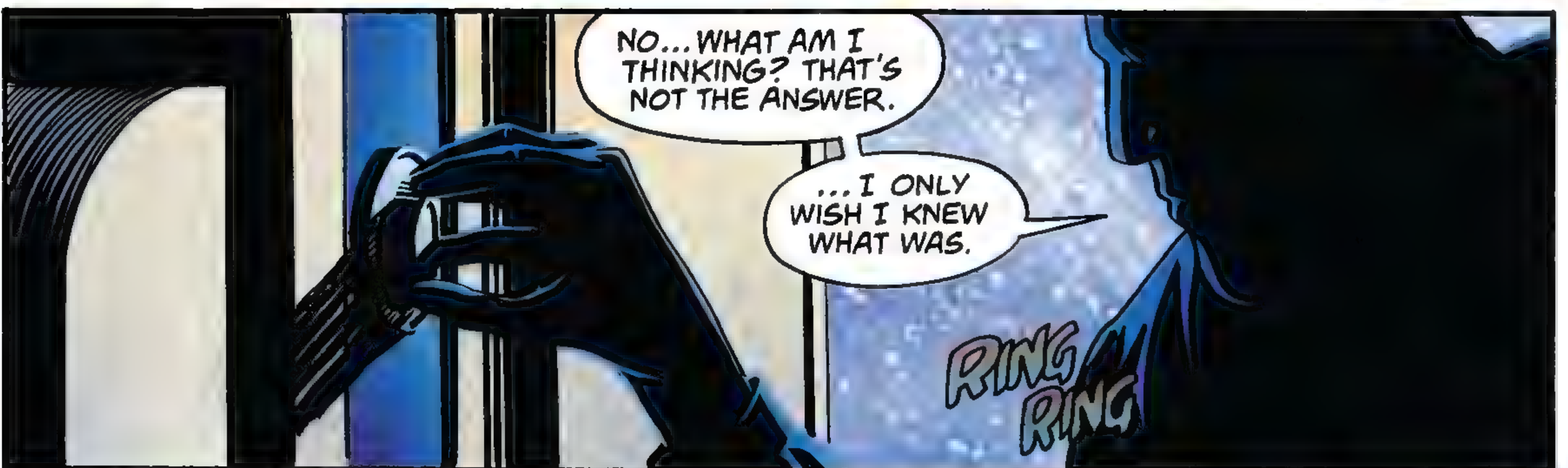
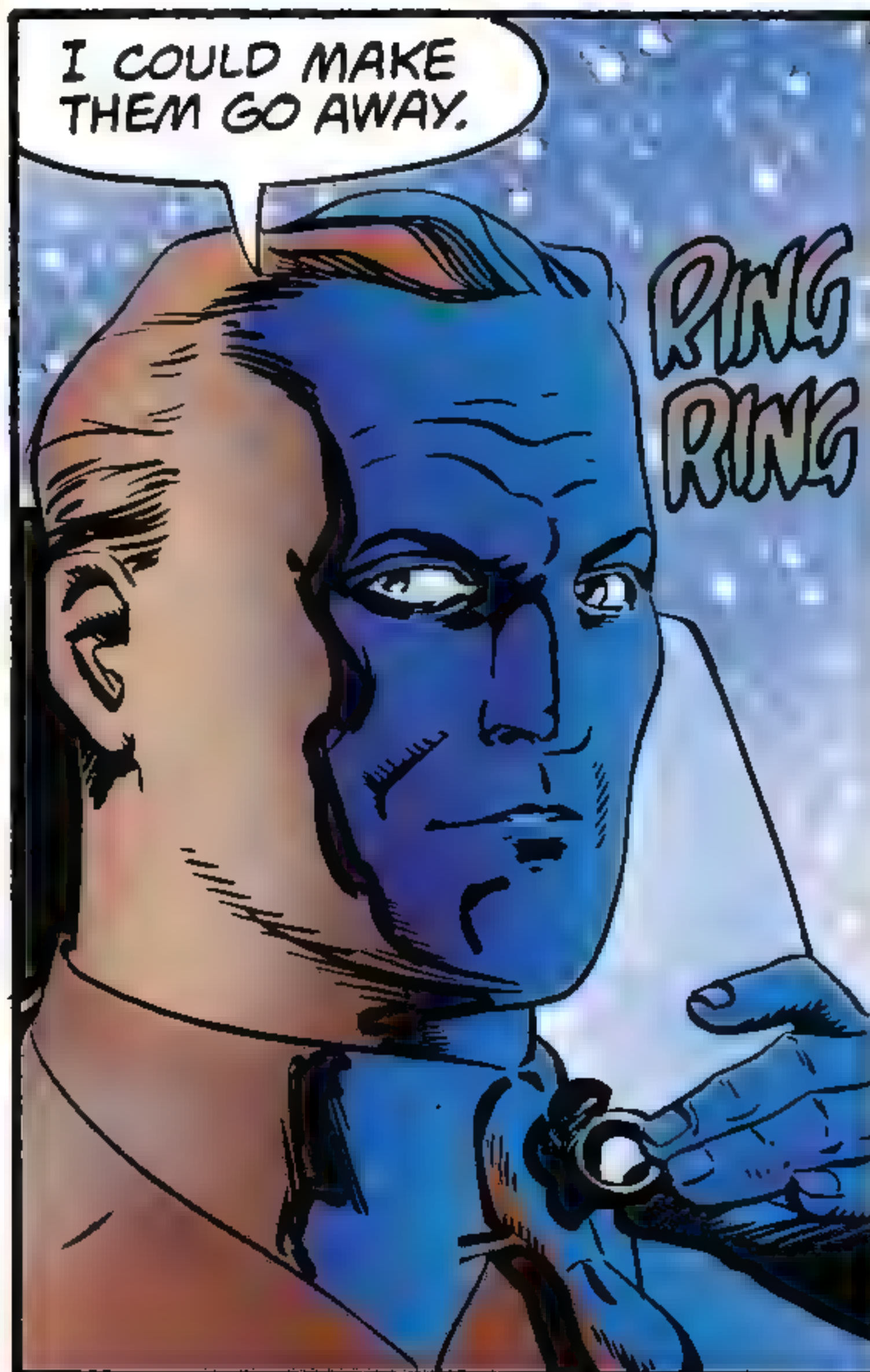
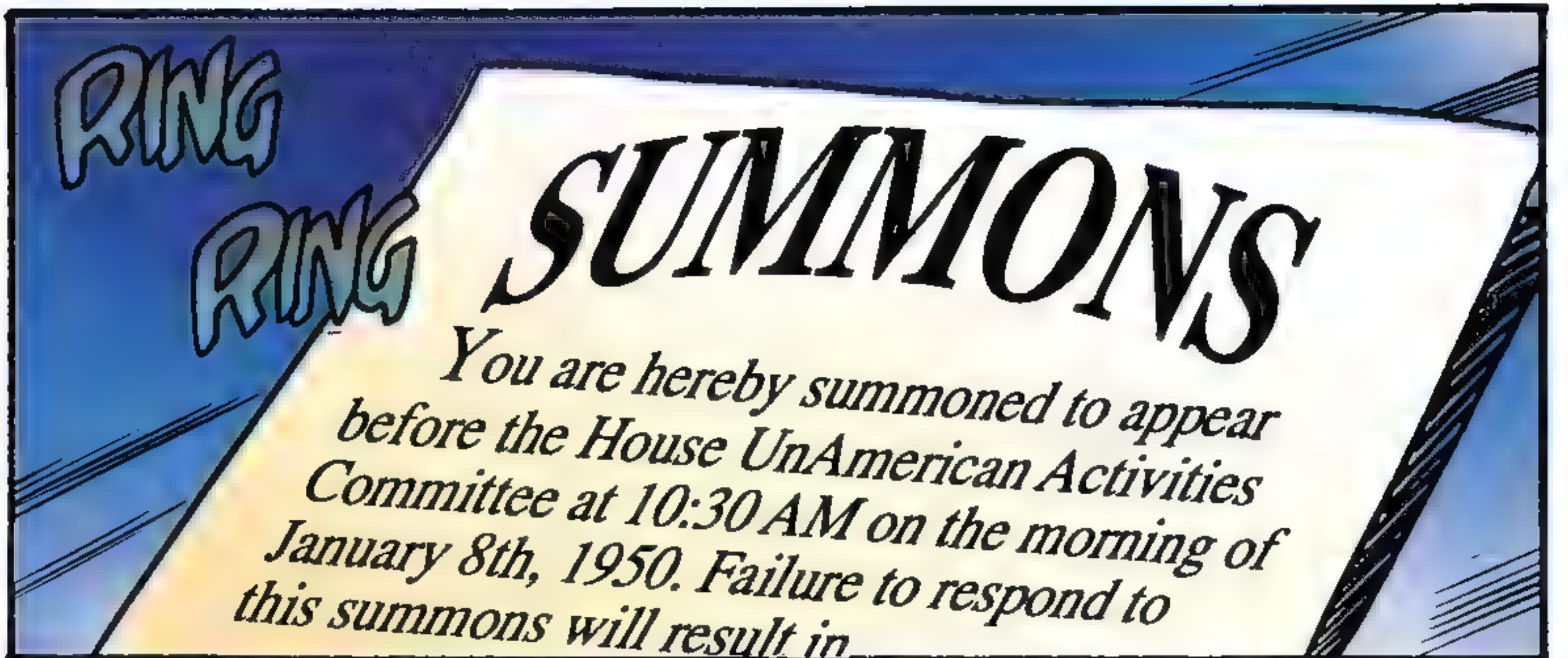


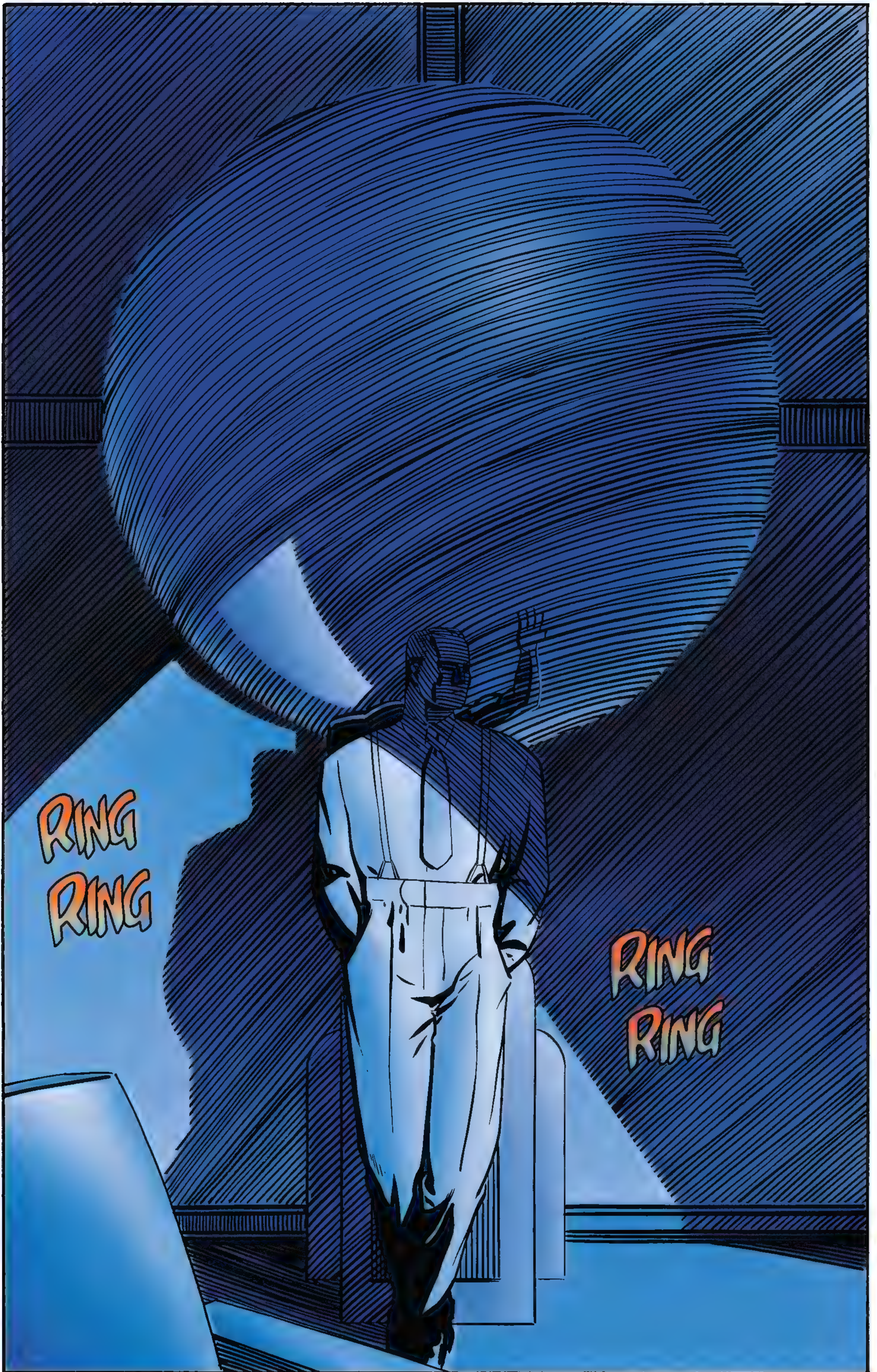
YES, WELL,
THAT WAS
THEN, BOYS.

WHAT
DO WE DO
NOW?

the blow must have
garbled my head... my
thought processes.
"don't trust thompson"
became a message from
my subconscious not to
trust anyone.











"We
had
it all."

—FROM THE INTRODUCTION



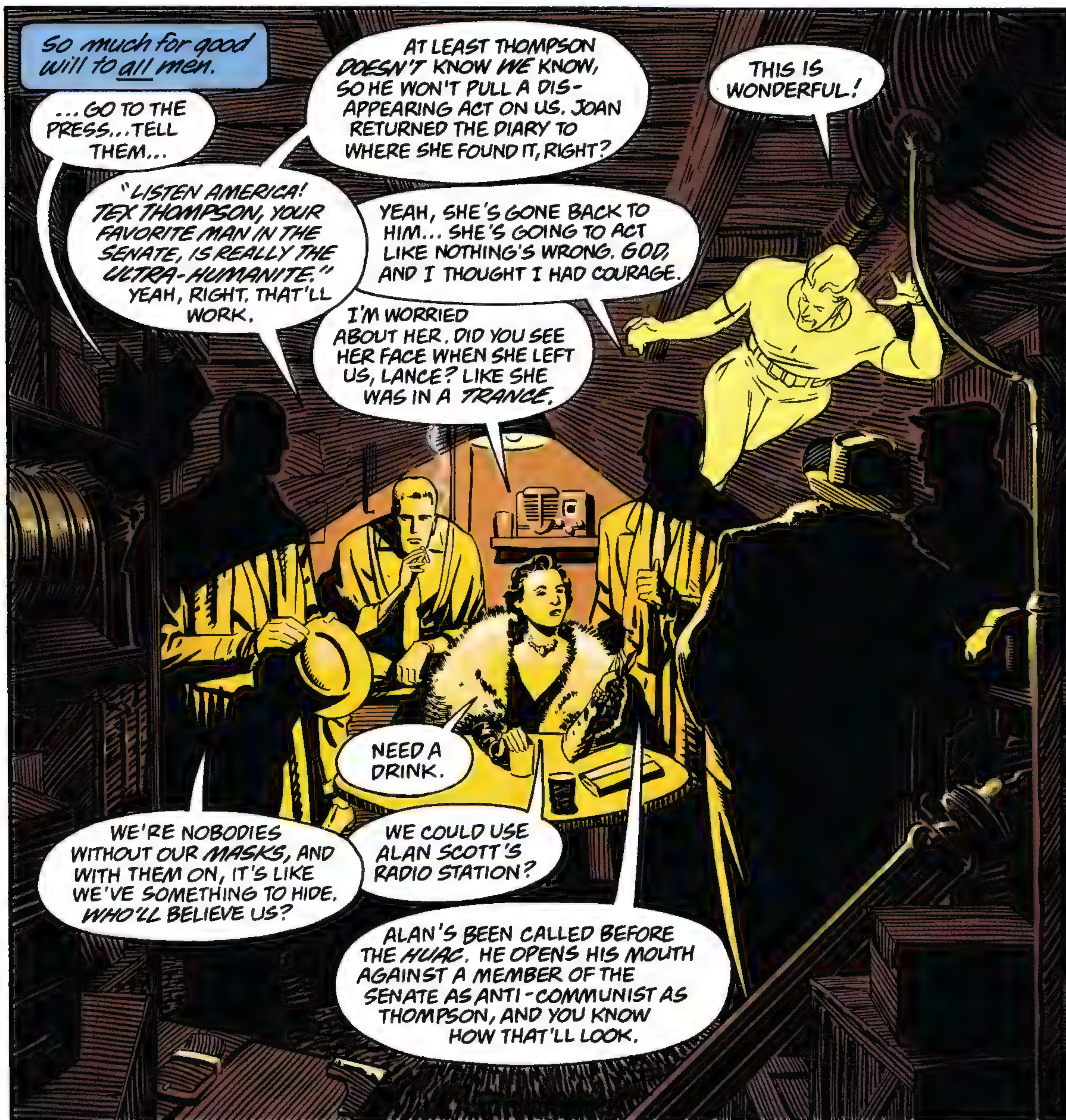
People tell me things. I don't know why, it's not that I'm particularly sensitive.

But if there's a problem... and even if it's obvious I won't be able to help in any way...

... People still come to me.

They told me at Christmas... about Thompson being the Ultra-Humanite.

And worse, they told me the truth about Dunbar, America's superman.



So much for good will to all men.

... GO TO THE PRESS... TELL THEM...

"LISTEN AMERICA! TEX THOMPSON, YOUR FAVORITE MAN IN THE SENATE, IS REALLY THE ULTRA-HUMANITE." YEAH, RIGHT, THAT'LL WORK.

AT LEAST THOMPSON DOESN'T KNOW WE KNOW, SO HE WON'T PULL A DIS-APPEARING ACT ON US. JOAN RETURNED THE DIARY TO WHERE SHE FOUND IT, RIGHT?

YEAH, SHE'S GONE BACK TO HIM... SHE'S GOING TO ACT LIKE NOTHING'S WRONG. GOD, AND I THOUGHT I HAD COURAGE.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT HER. DID YOU SEE HER FACE WHEN SHE LEFT US, LANCE? LIKE SHE WAS IN A TRANCE.

THIS IS WONDERFUL!

NEED A DRINK.

WE'RE NOBODIES WITHOUT OUR MASKS, AND WITH THEM ON, IT'S LIKE WE'VE SOMETHING TO HIDE. WHO'LL BELIEVE US?

WE COULD USE ALAN SCOTT'S RADIO STATION?

ALAN'S BEEN CALLED BEFORE THE HUAC. HE OPENS HIS MOUTH AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE SENATE AS ANTI-COMMUNIST AS THOMPSON, AND YOU KNOW HOW THAT'LL LOOK.

LOOK, IT SEEMS TO ME WE'RE AFRAID TO EVEN WHISPER WHAT'S REALLY BOTHERING US. IT'S DUNBAR, ISN'T IT? THE REAL PROBLEM'S DUNBAR...

AND WHETHER WHAT THE HUMANITE WROTE ABOUT HIM AT THE END OF HIS DIARY IS TRUE, AND HOW WE HANDLE THINGS IF IT IS--

WAIT... WHAT WAS--

AND WITH THE NEW YEAR COMES FRESH ACTIVITY FROM SENATOR TEX THOMPSON. HE HAS AGAIN SUGGESTED THAT THE MYSTERY MEN OF AMERICA COME FORTH AND PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG AT A CEREMONY IN WASHINGTON. THIS TIME THOMPSON IS BACKED UP BY A PRESIDENTIAL DECREE. PRESIDENT TRUMAN IS QUOTED AS SAYING, "WHERE'S THE HARM?"

WE CAN THEREFORE ASSUME THAT THIS GATHERING WILL BE BETTER ATTENDED THAN THOMPSON'S LAST ATTEMPT--

LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT OUR VENUE.

IF WE DECIDE TO TURN UP.

WELL, EVERYONE ELSE WILL. IGNORING THOMPSON IS ONE THING. IGNORING THE PRESIDENT'S A DIFFERENT MATTER.

BUT WHAT DO WE DO THEN? RUSH THE STAGE AND ATTACK TWO INNOCENT MEN? THAT'S HOW IT WILL LOOK.

YEAH... WE'VE GOT OUR VENUE, BUT WE HAVE TO HANDLE THE SITUATION IN THE RIGHT WAY TOO.

IF... WE GOT A MAN *INSIDE* THOMPSON'S CAMP. ONE OF US. MAYBE--

IS THERE TIME FOR THAT? THE CEREMONY'S THIS WEEK.

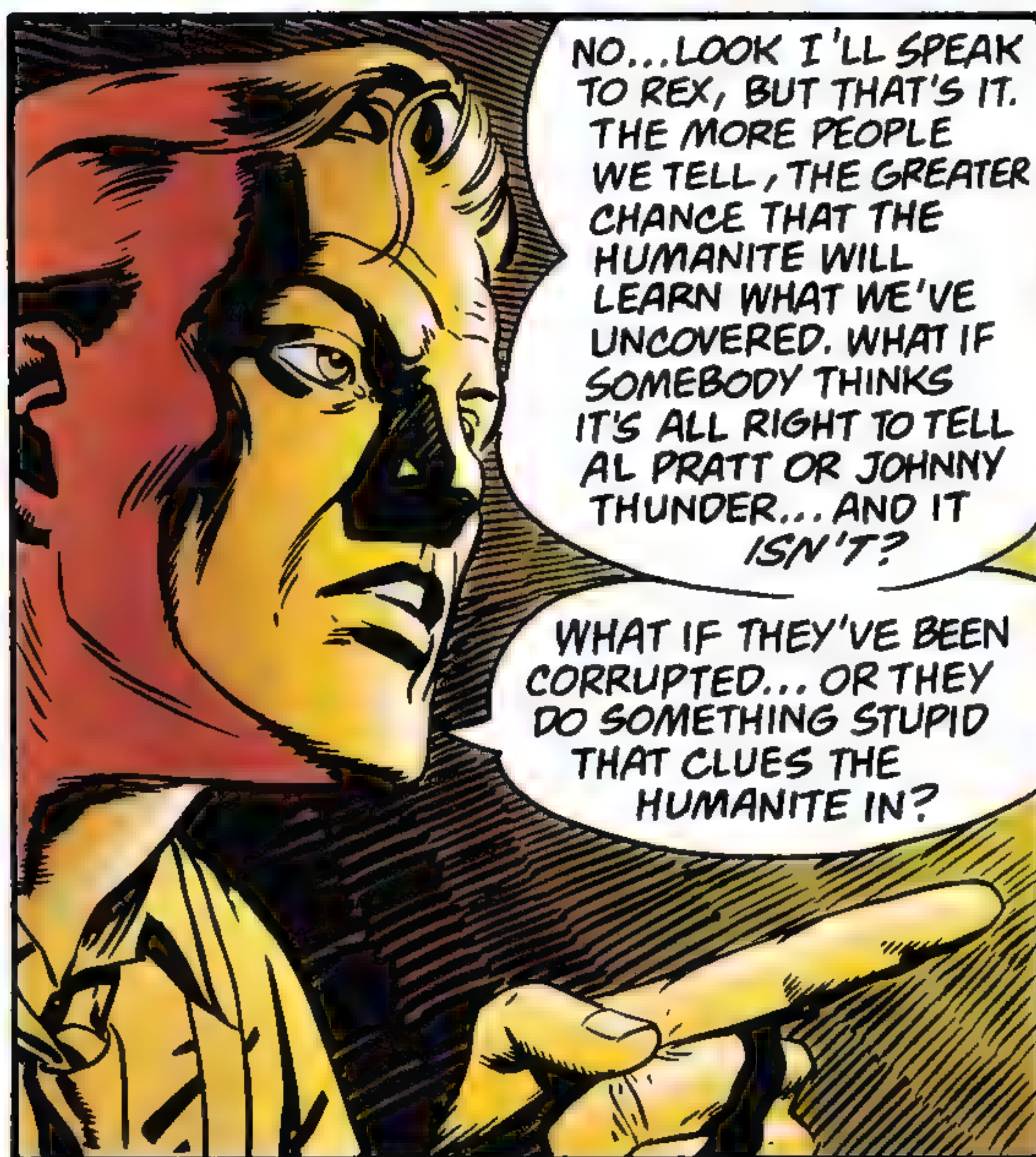
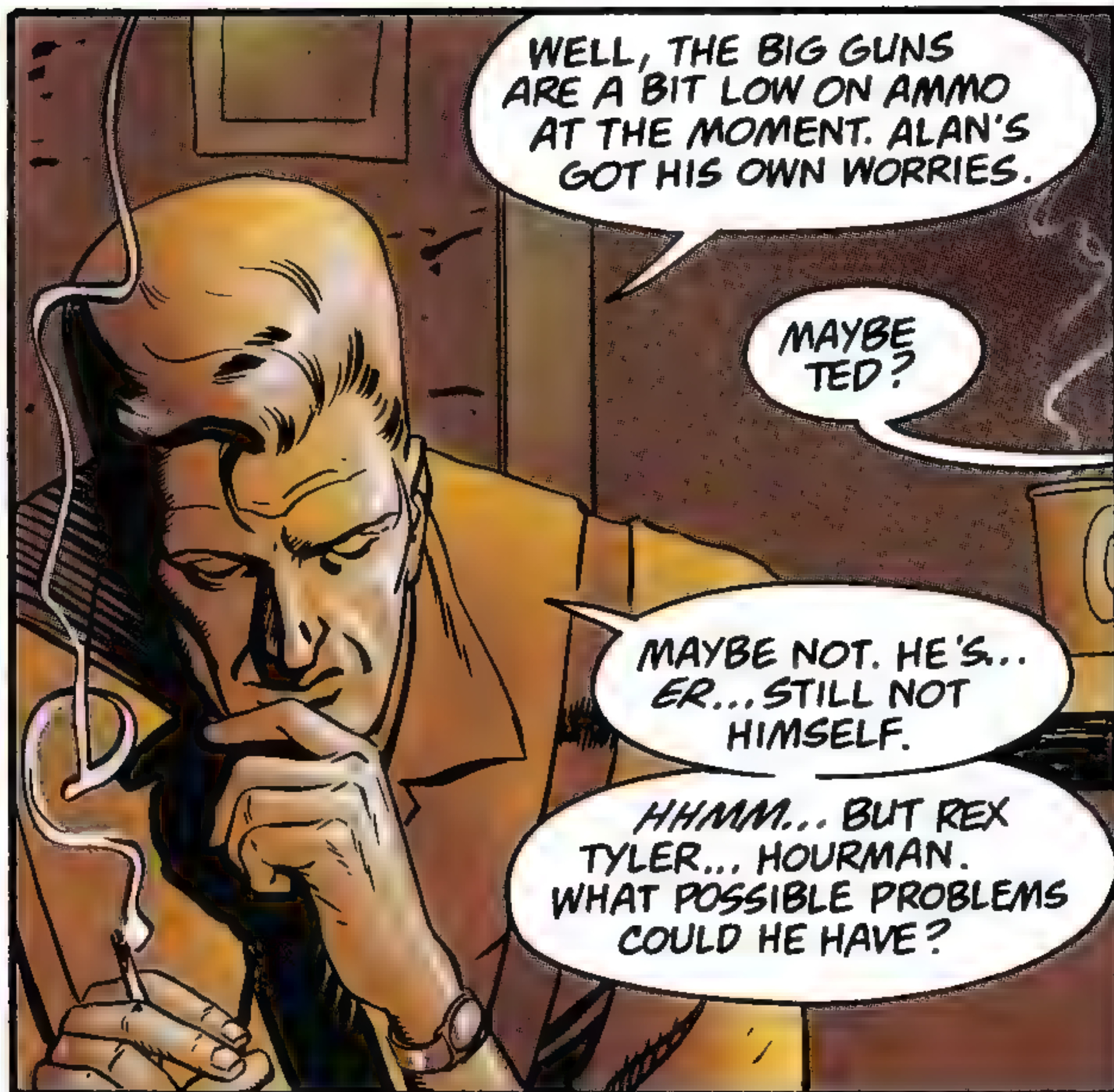
NO, I MEAN *ON THE DAY*. WE HAVE A MAN UP ON THE PODIUM. NOT JUST PLEDGING ALLEGIANCE, BUT ACTUALLY JOINING THOMPSON'S SUPERHEROES.

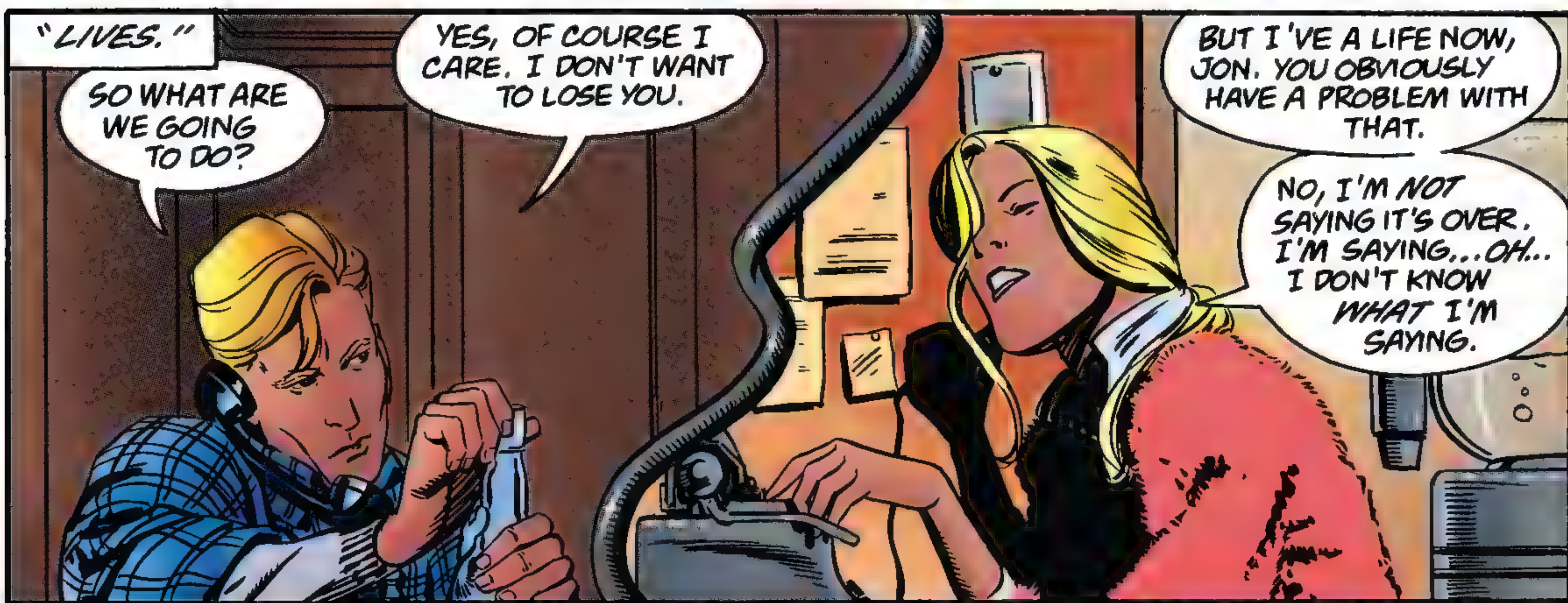
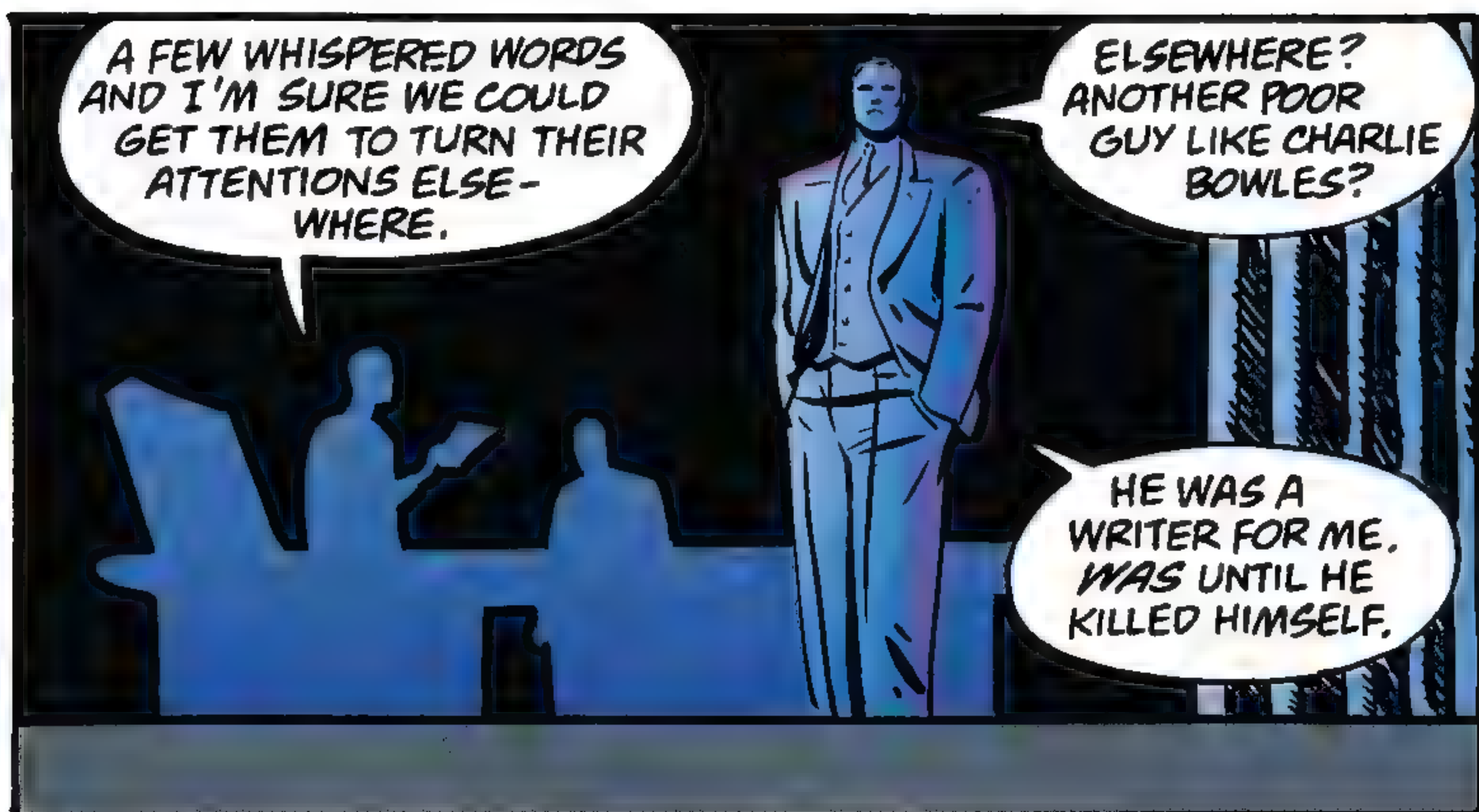
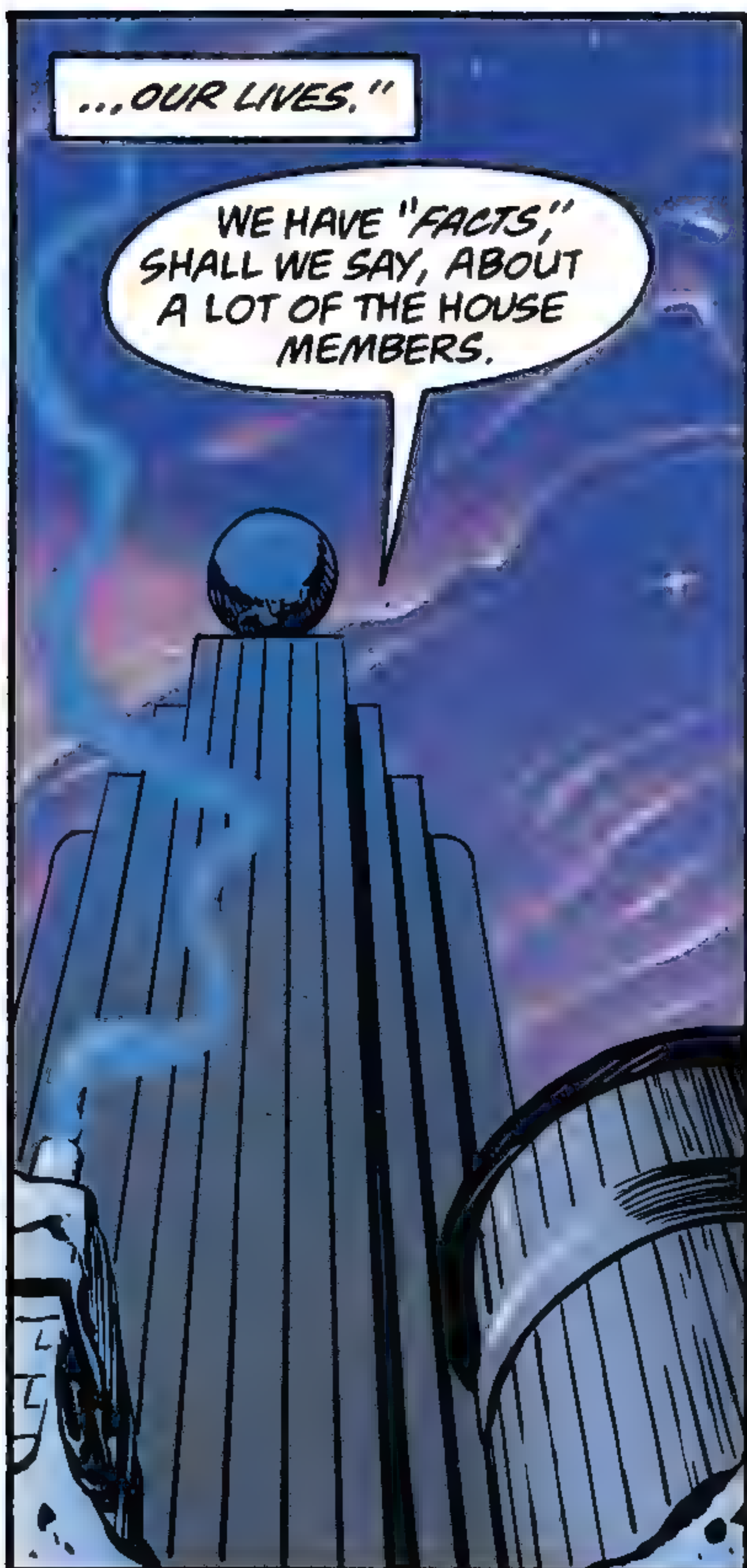
THEN WITH THE EYES OF THE WORLD ON HIM... OUR MAN REVEALS THE TRUTH... THE WHOLE TRUTH.

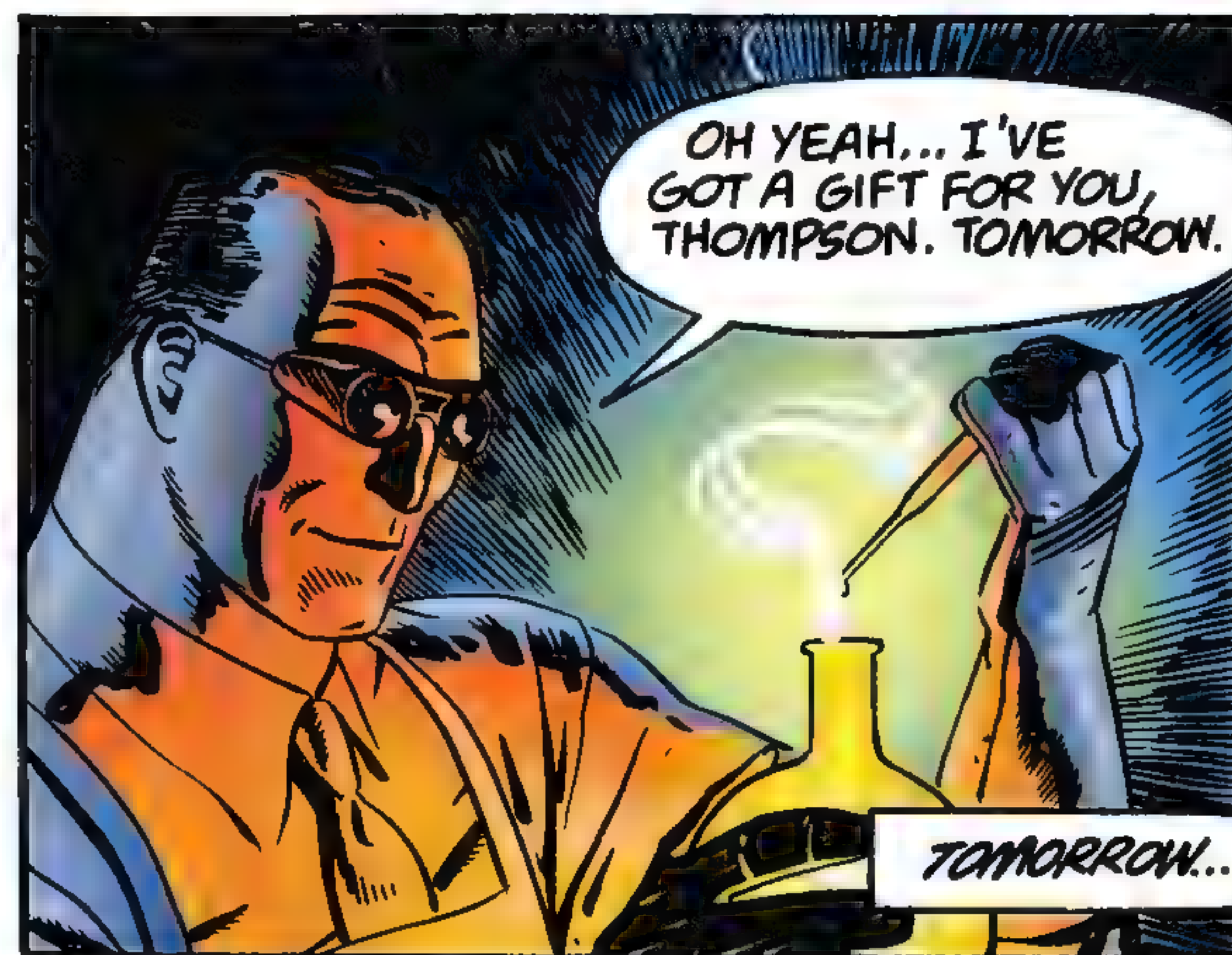
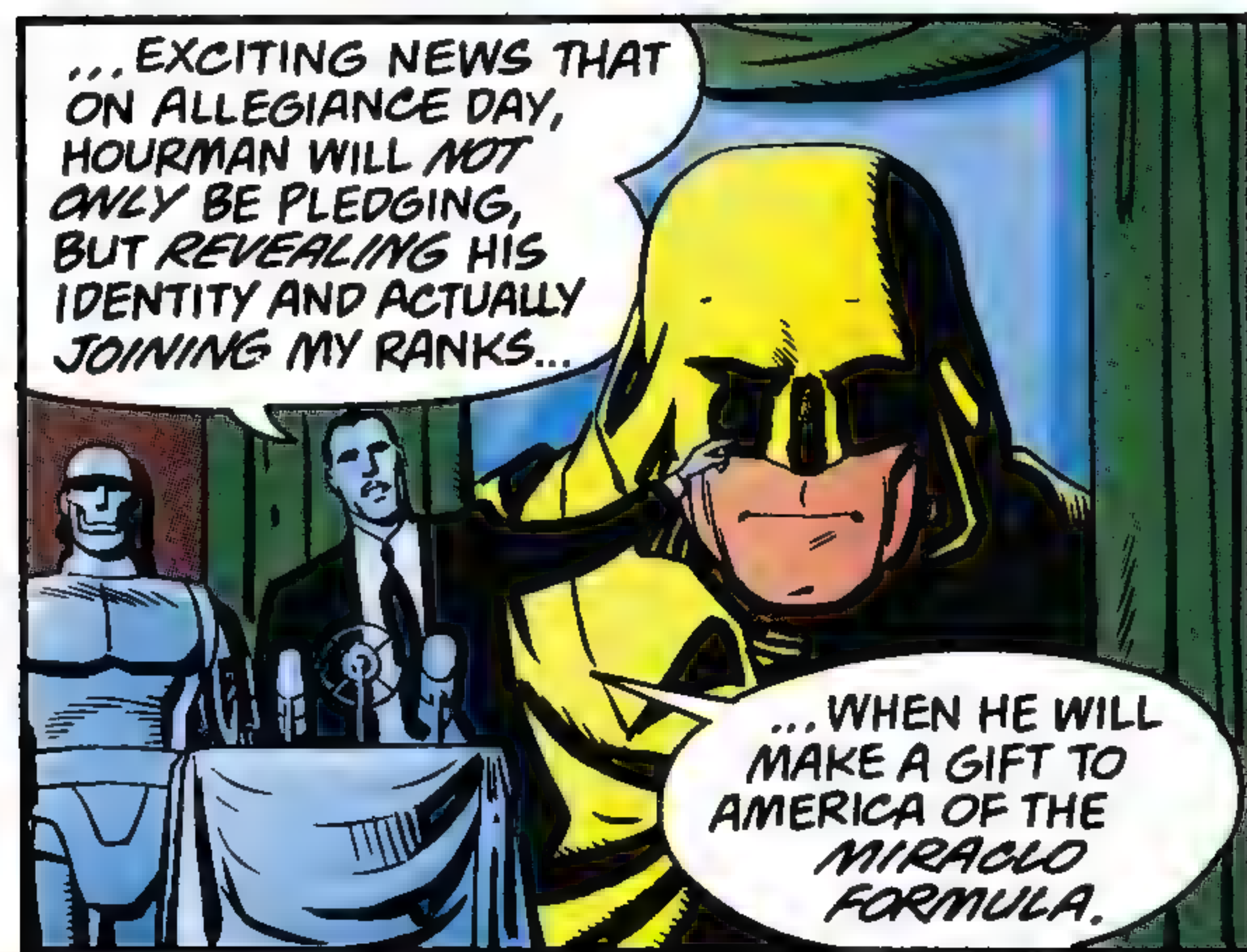
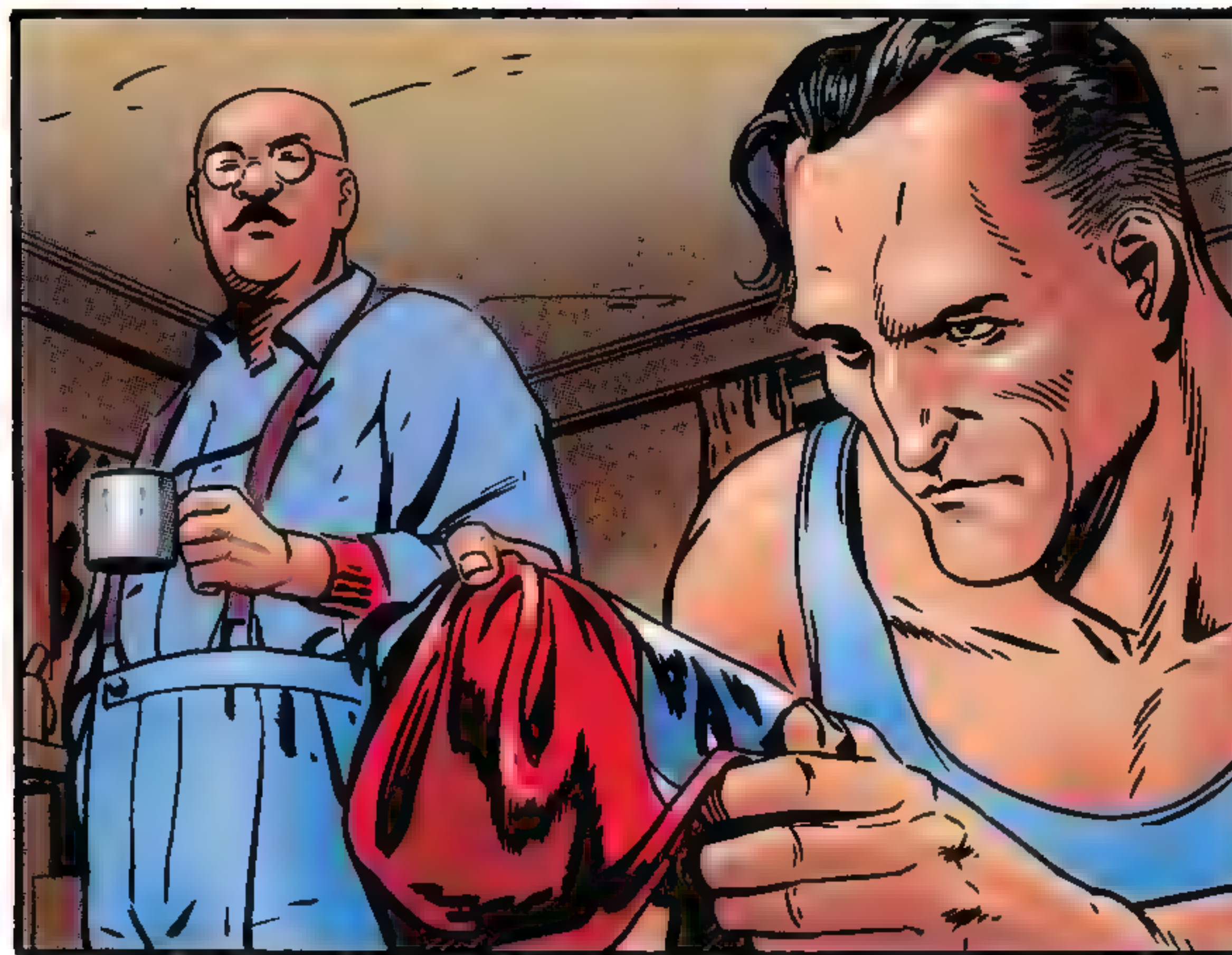
BUT...

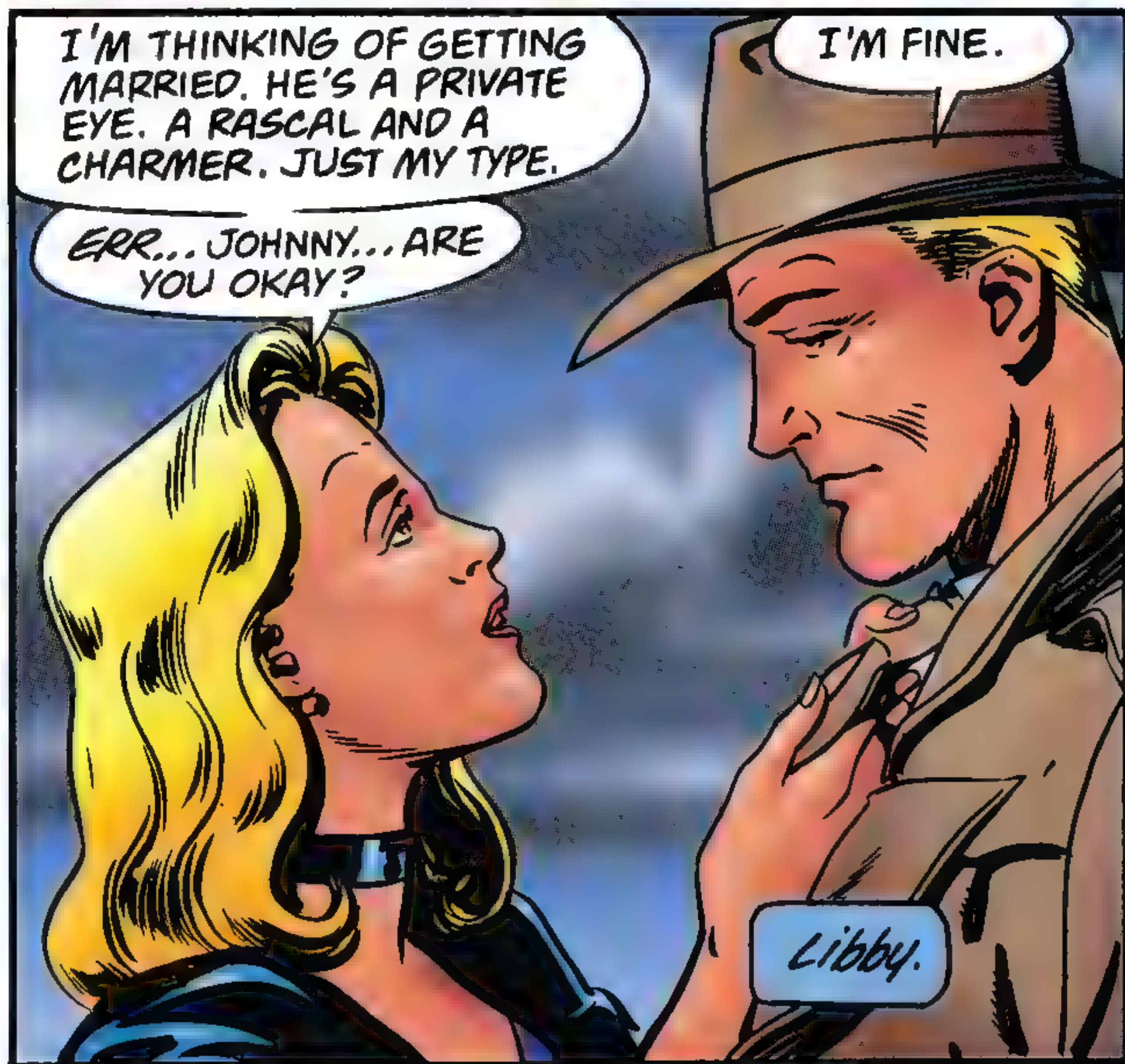
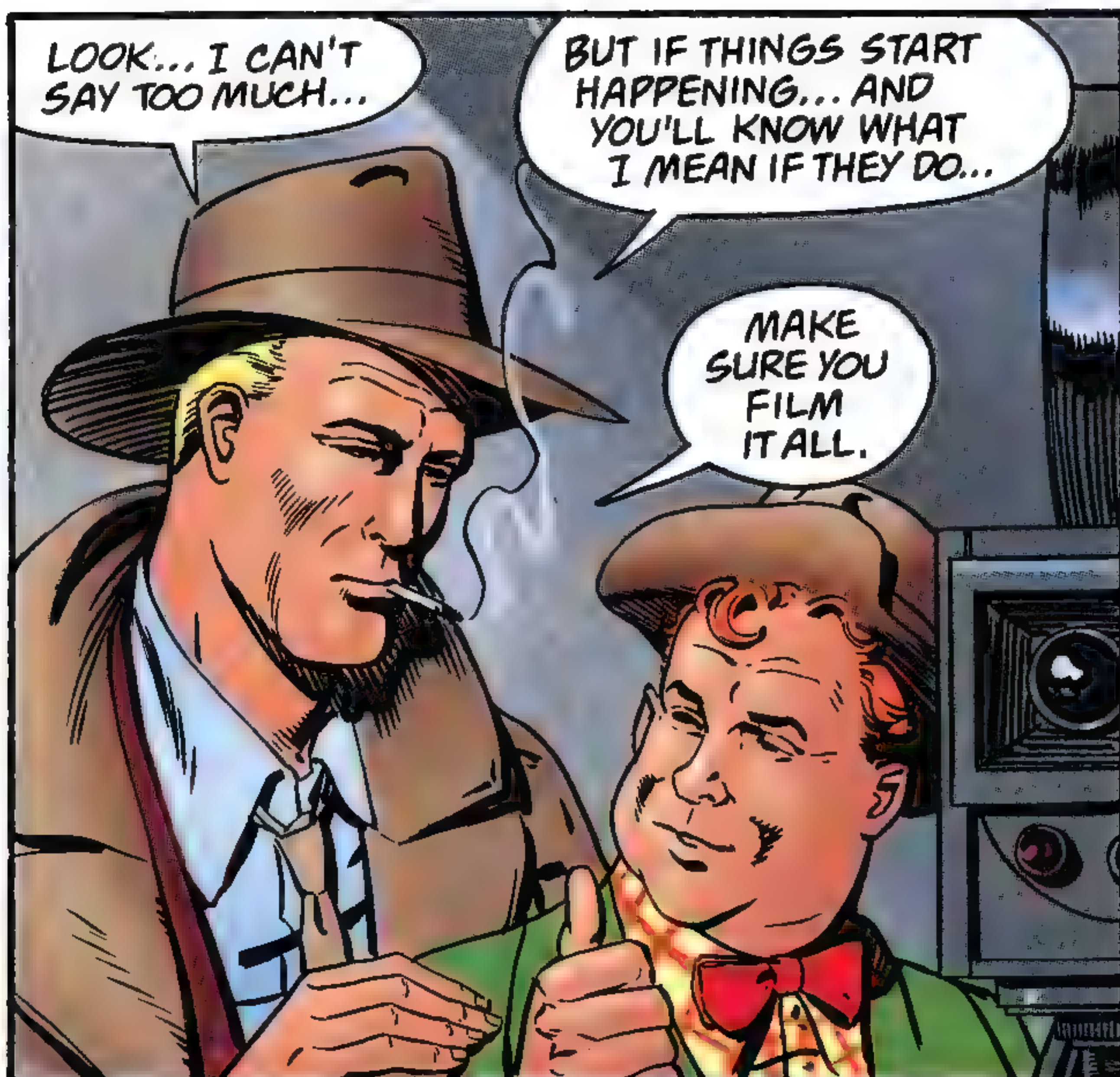
... BUT DUNBAR WILL BE UP THERE TOO. DUNBAR! WHICHEVER HERO IT IS... HE OPENS HIS MOUTH AND HE'S DEAD.

YEAH, WELL... I DIDN'T SAY THE PLAN WAS PERFECT.

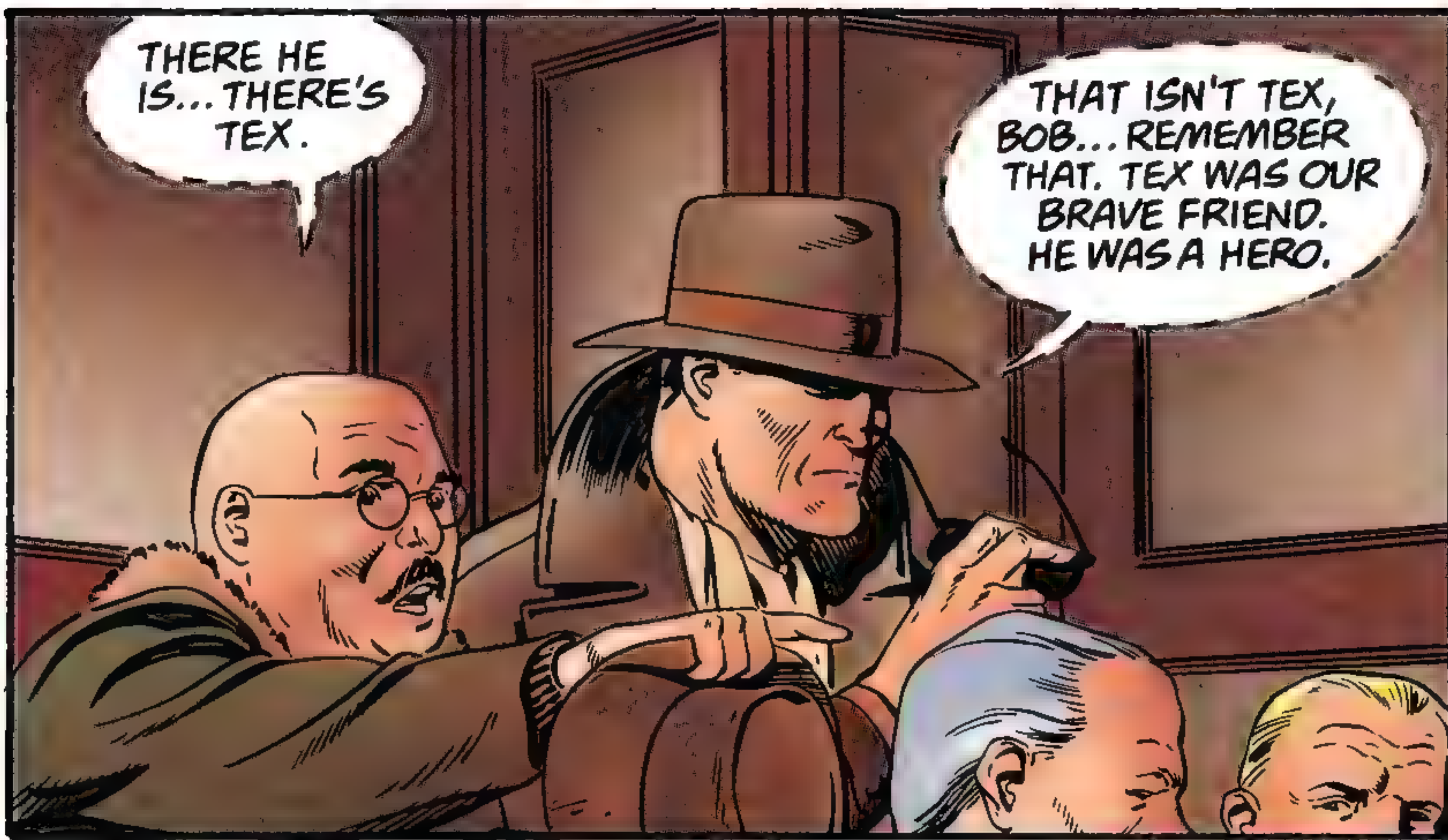














...FOR JOAN. SHE'S SO DEPENDENT... VULNERABLE... SO UNLIKE ME.

I'M SCARED OF WHAT THIS HAS DONE TO HER MIND.



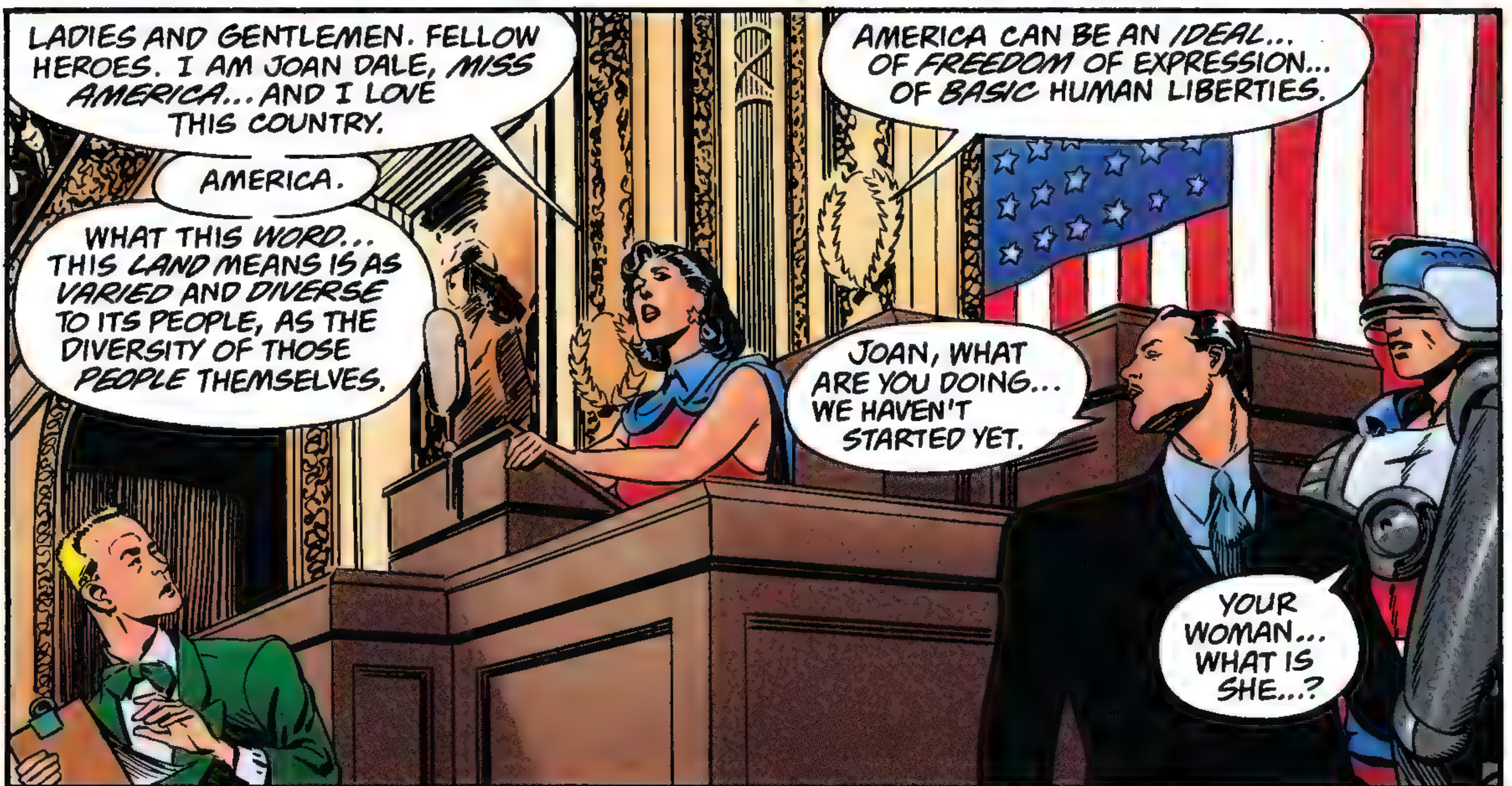
HELL, HONESTLY, I'M SCARED FOR ALL OF US.

ALL I KNOW IS... WHATEVER HAPPENS...



I WON'T LET ANYTHING HARM Y--

MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE.



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. FELLOW HEROES. I AM JOAN DALE, MISS AMERICA... AND I LOVE THIS COUNTRY.

AMERICA.

WHAT THIS WORD... THIS LAND MEANS IS AS VARIED AND DIVERSE TO ITS PEOPLE, AS THE DIVERSITY OF THOSE PEOPLE THEMSELVES.

AMERICA CAN BE AN IDEAL... OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION... OF BASIC HUMAN LIBERTIES.

JOAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING... WE HAVEN'T STARTED YET.

YOUR WOMAN... WHAT IS SHE...?



AMERICA IS TAP AND JAZZ AND BASEBALL.

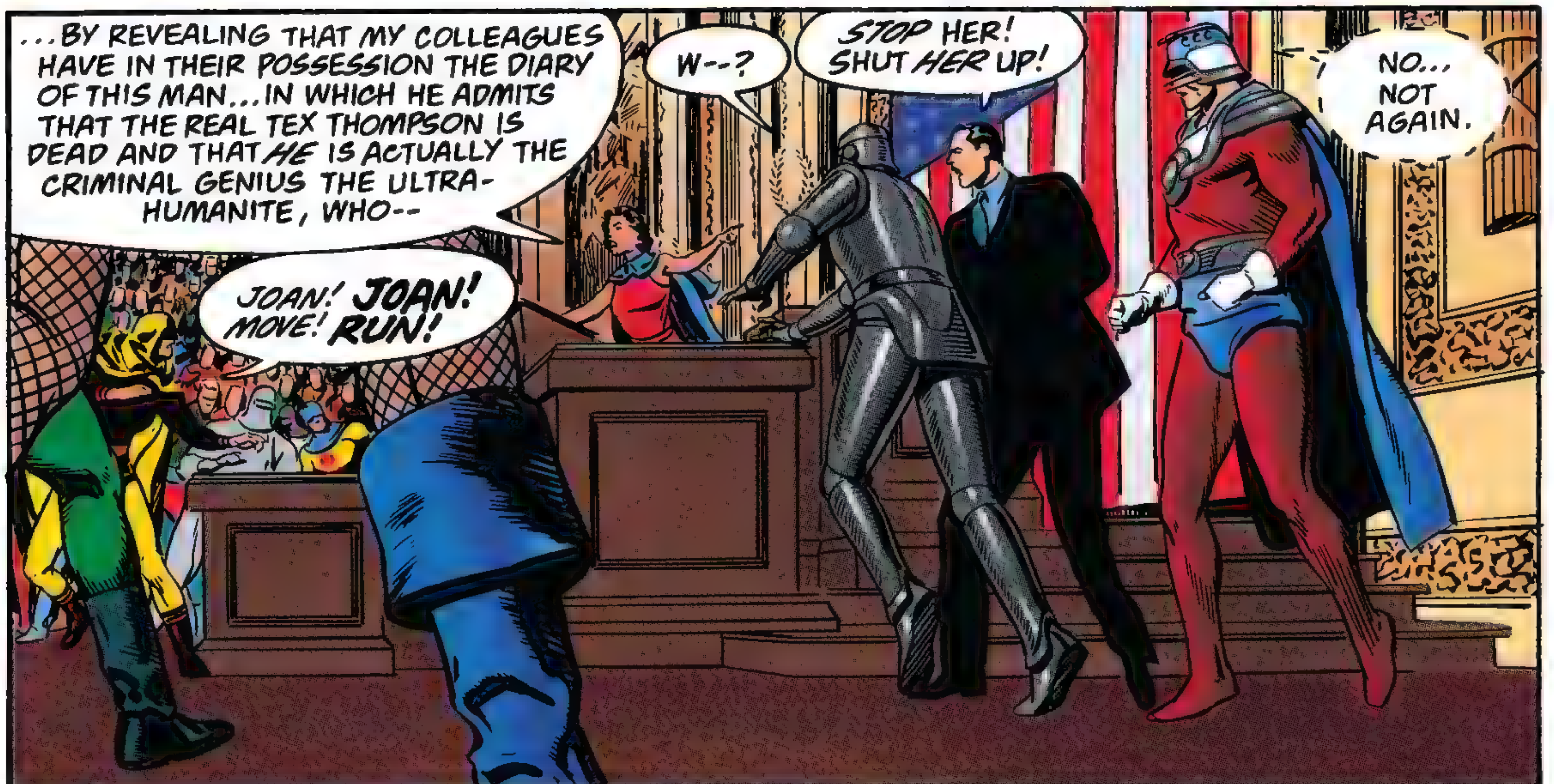
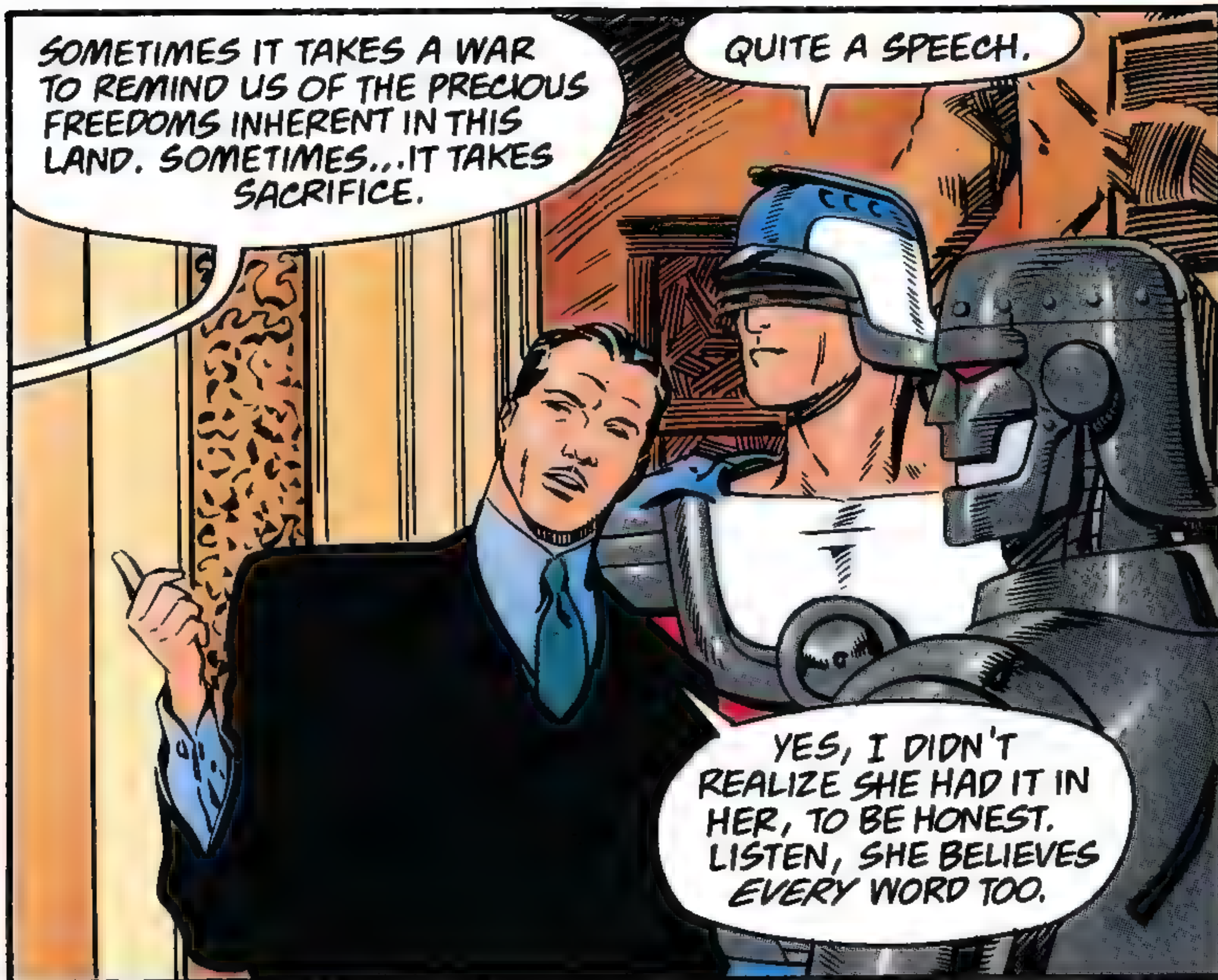
IT'S A PURE HONEST ENERGY... A LIFEFORCE STRETCHING FROM HOLLYWOOD TO THE HEARTLAND TO HARLEM.

BASED ON THE DREAMS OF PIONEERS, OUTCASTS AND PILGRIMS. FUELED BY THEIR STRENGTH... AND SPIRIT.

...SPIRIT THAT COURSES THROUGH OUR VEINS. SPIRIT THAT FLOWS THROUGH OUR RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS... THAT BLOWS ACROSS THE PRAIRIES.

THAT SPIRIT... THAT DREAM IS HERE TODAY... IN YOU, MY FELLOW HEROES... IT'S BEATING IN YOUR HEARTS. AMERICA.

THIS VAST LAND FOUNDED ON THE BASIC RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL.









ENOUGH OF THE SMILES
AND LIES... THE PRETENSE
TO JEW AND BLACK, THAT
BECAUSE THEY WERE
AMERICANS I SAW THEM
AS ANYTHING BUT INFERIOR.

AND THE SPEECHES...
THEY DIDN'T WORK THE
FIRST TIME. WHY... WHY
DID I EVER THINK THEY'D
WORK THIS TIME?

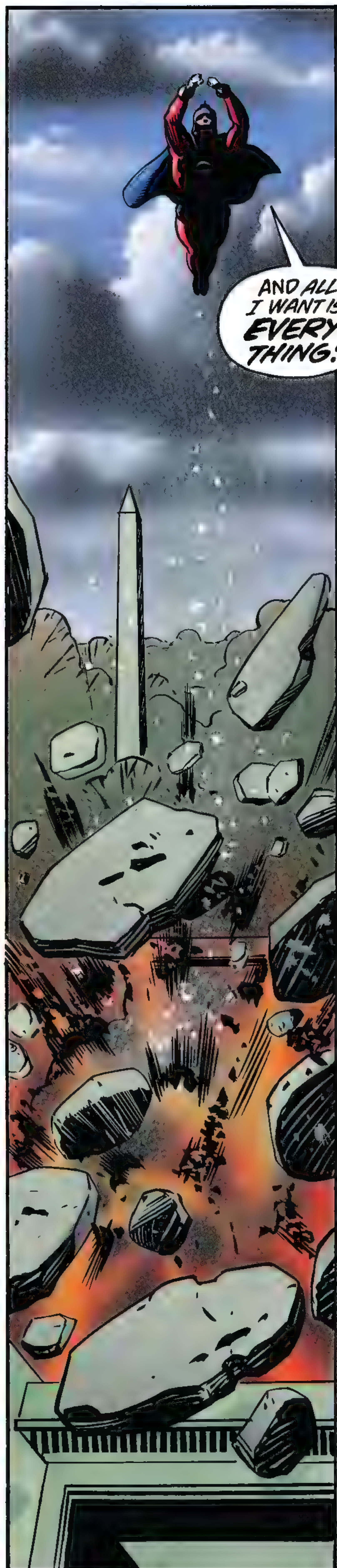
Hitler's body had been
burnt in the bunker by
his underlings, after
Thompson had killed
him and left the scene.
At least THAT was the
STORY.

The TRUTH was that
the body had been
burnt to hide the signs
of SURGERY... an empty
skull cavity. The truth
is that the DEVIL hovers
above me... in the body
of a GOD.

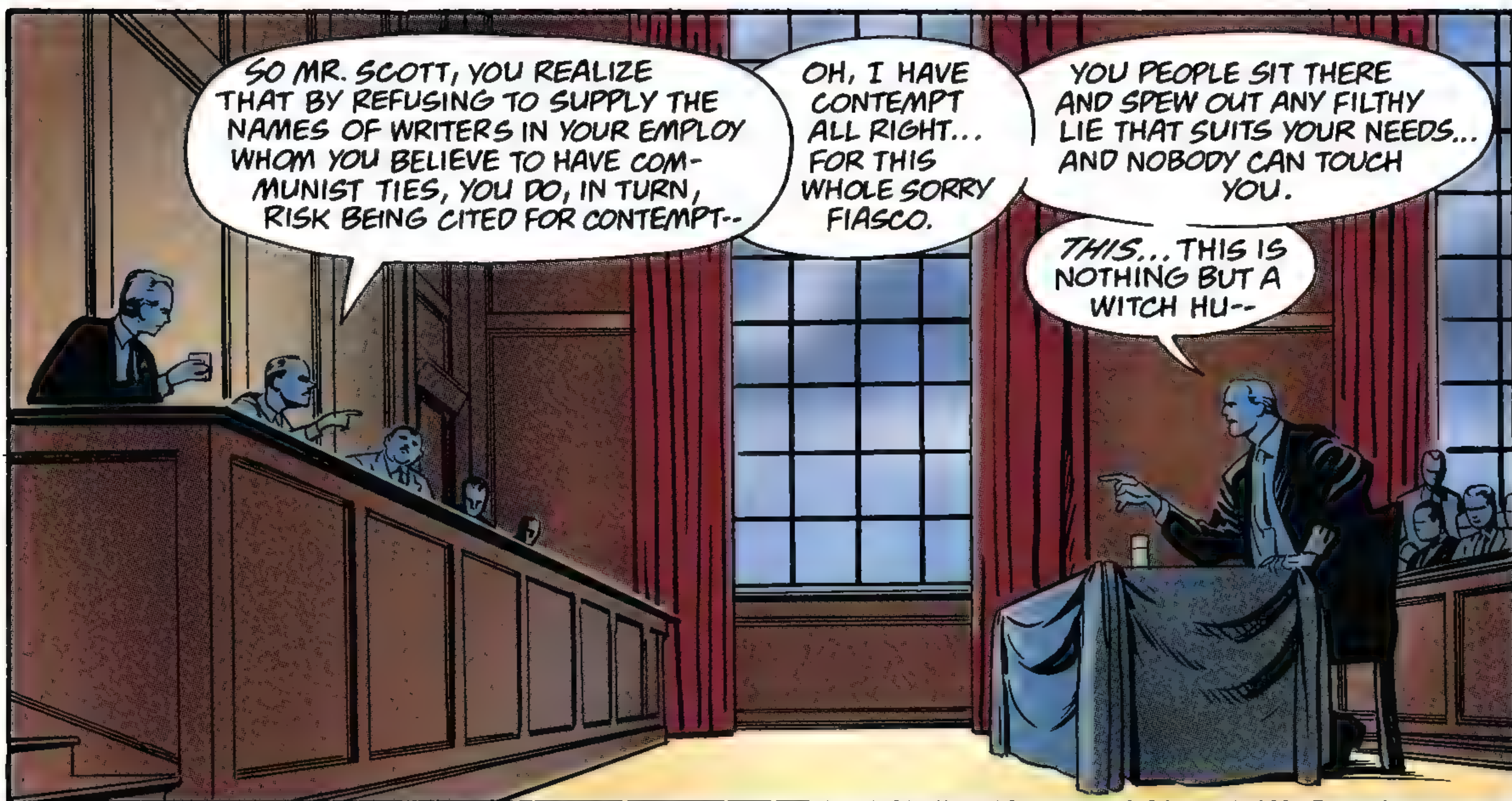
NO MORE TALK. I
AM OVERMAN... DYNAMAN.
I'VE THE POWER I'VE
ALWAYS DREAMED OF.

And my blood
runs cold.

TIME TO BEGIN
USING IT... TO GET
WHAT I WANT.



AND ALL
I WANT IS
**EVERY-
THING!**

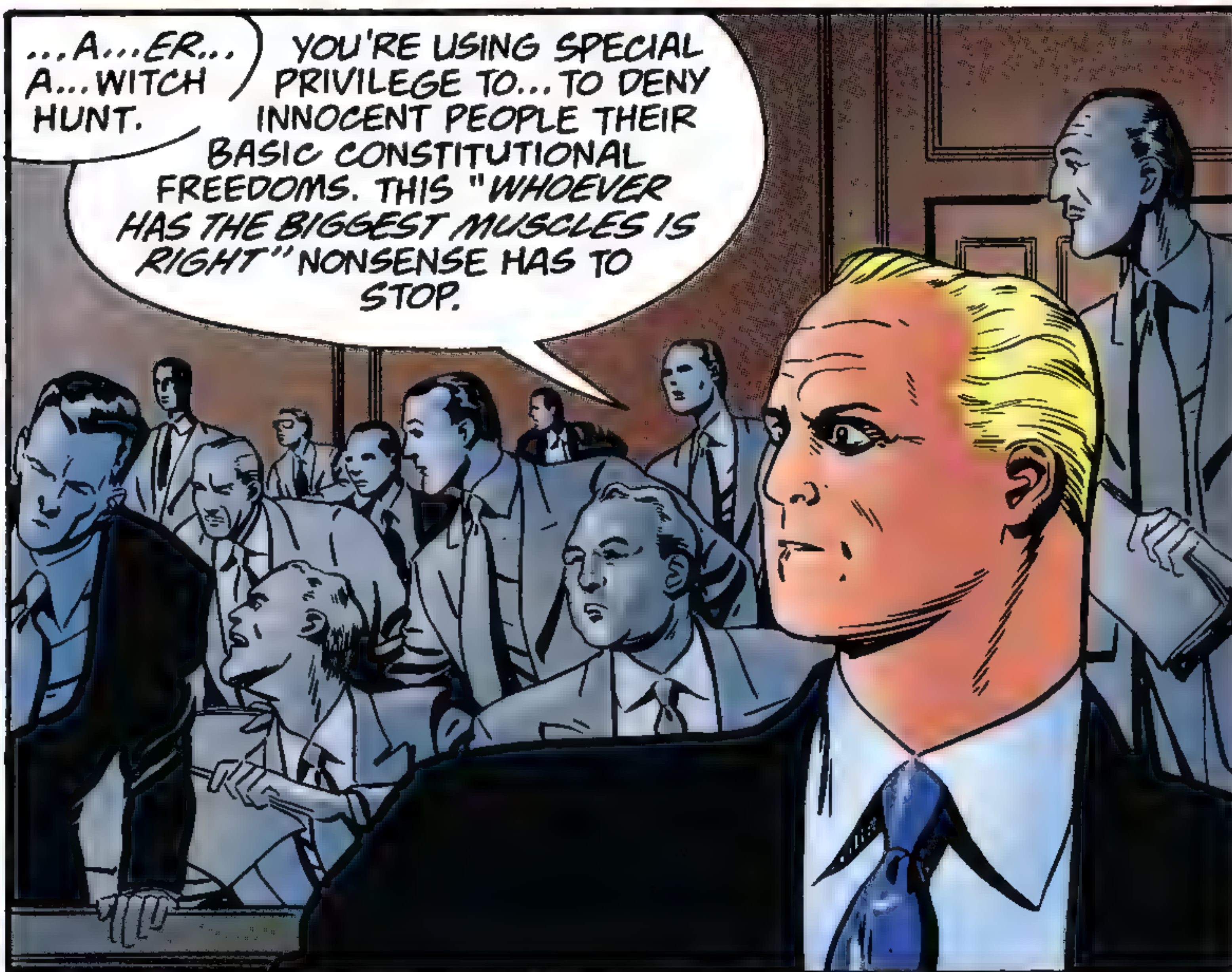
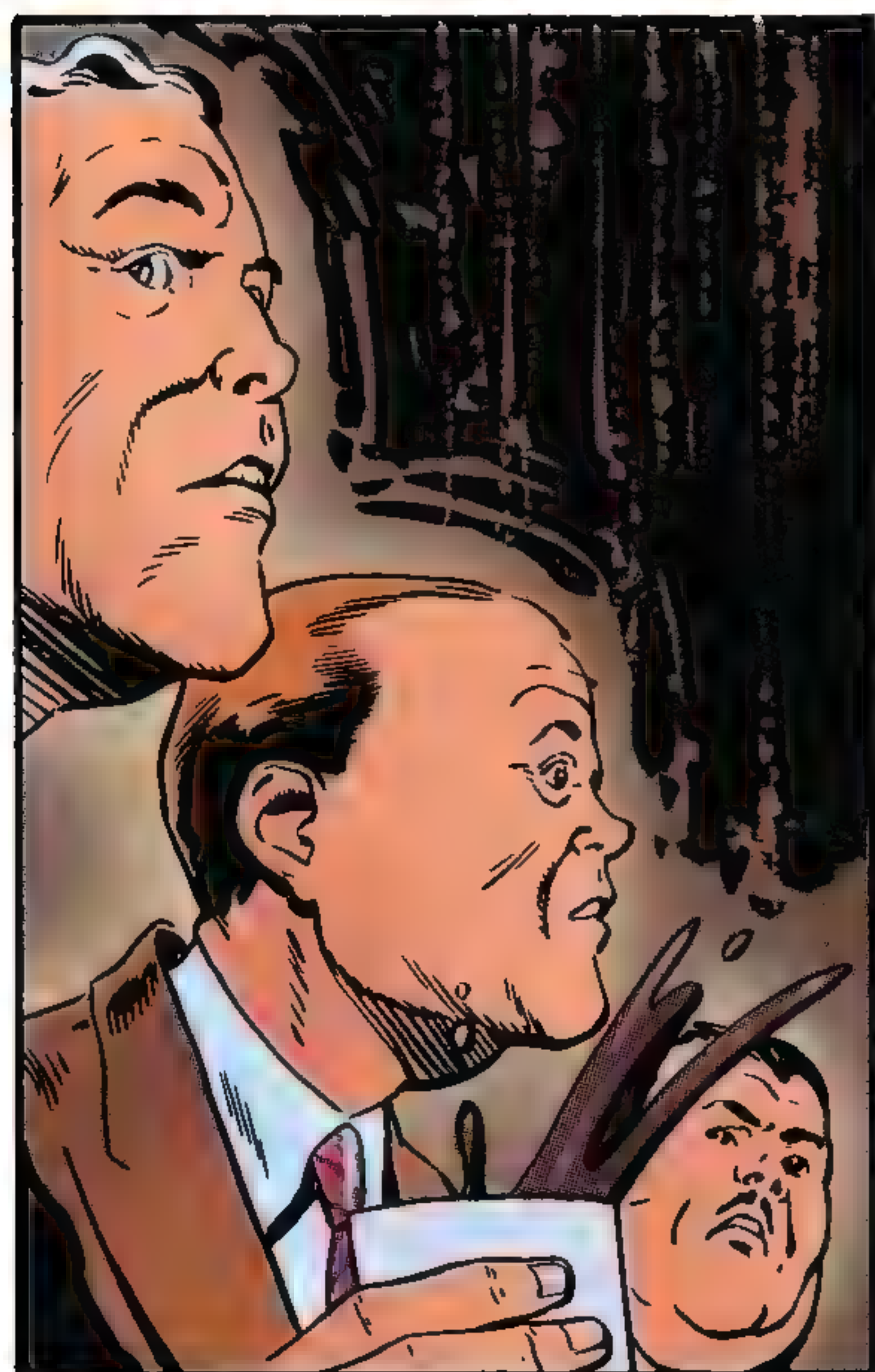


SO MR. SCOTT, YOU REALIZE THAT BY REFUSING TO SUPPLY THE NAMES OF WRITERS IN YOUR EMPLOY WHOM YOU BELIEVE TO HAVE COMMUNIST TIES, YOU DO, IN TURN, RISK BEING CITED FOR CONTEMPT--

OH, I HAVE CONTEMPT ALL RIGHT... FOR THIS WHOLE SORRY FIASCO.

YOU PEOPLE SIT THERE AND SPEW OUT ANY FILTHY LIE THAT SUITS YOUR NEEDS... AND NOBODY CAN TOUCH YOU.

THIS... THIS IS NOTHING BUT A WITCH HU--



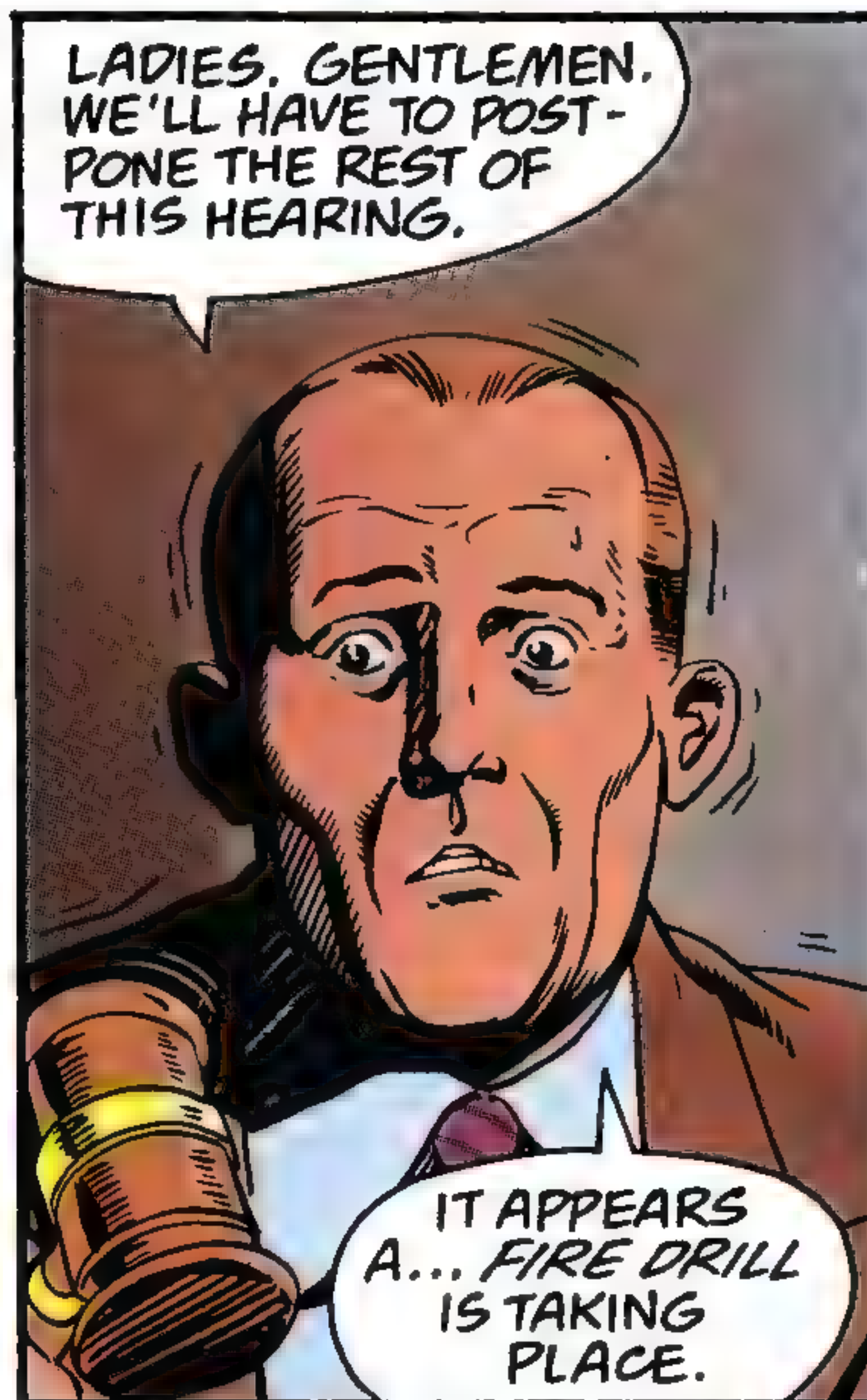
...A...ER... A...WITCH HUNT. YOU'RE USING SPECIAL PRIVILEGE TO... TO DENY INNOCENT PEOPLE THEIR BASIC CONSTITUTIONAL FREEDOMS. THIS "WHOEVER HAS THE BIGGEST MUSCLES IS RIGHT" NONSENSE HAS TO STOP.



IT'S... ER... E... EXACTLY WHAT COST THIS COUNTRY COUNTLESS LIVES AND DOLLARS, TRYING TO ABOLISH IT OVERSEAS.



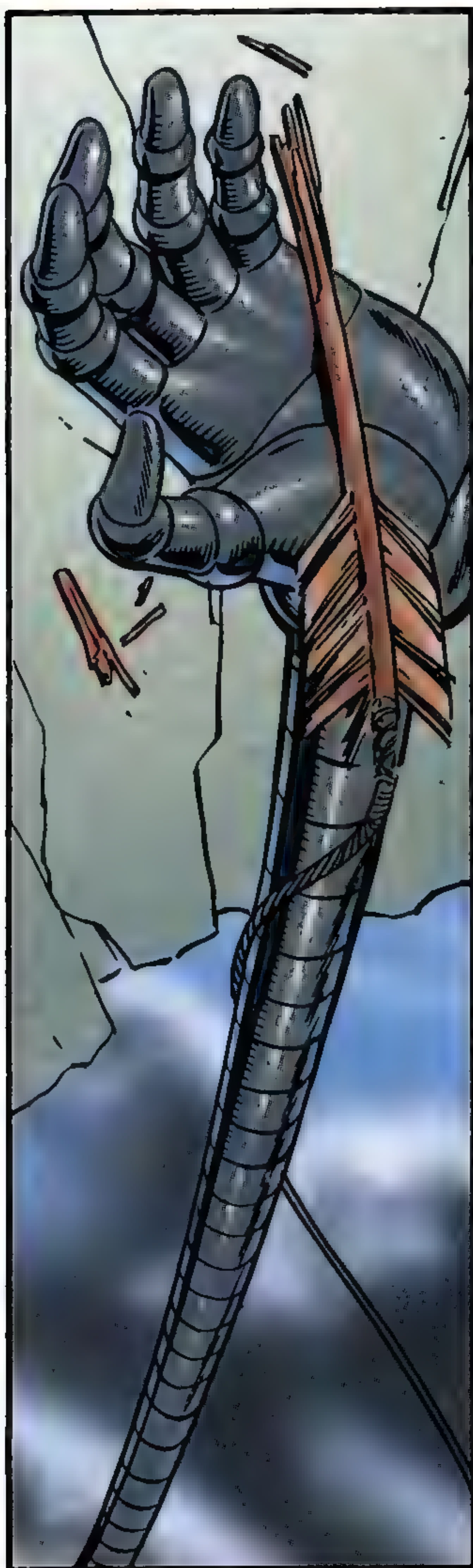
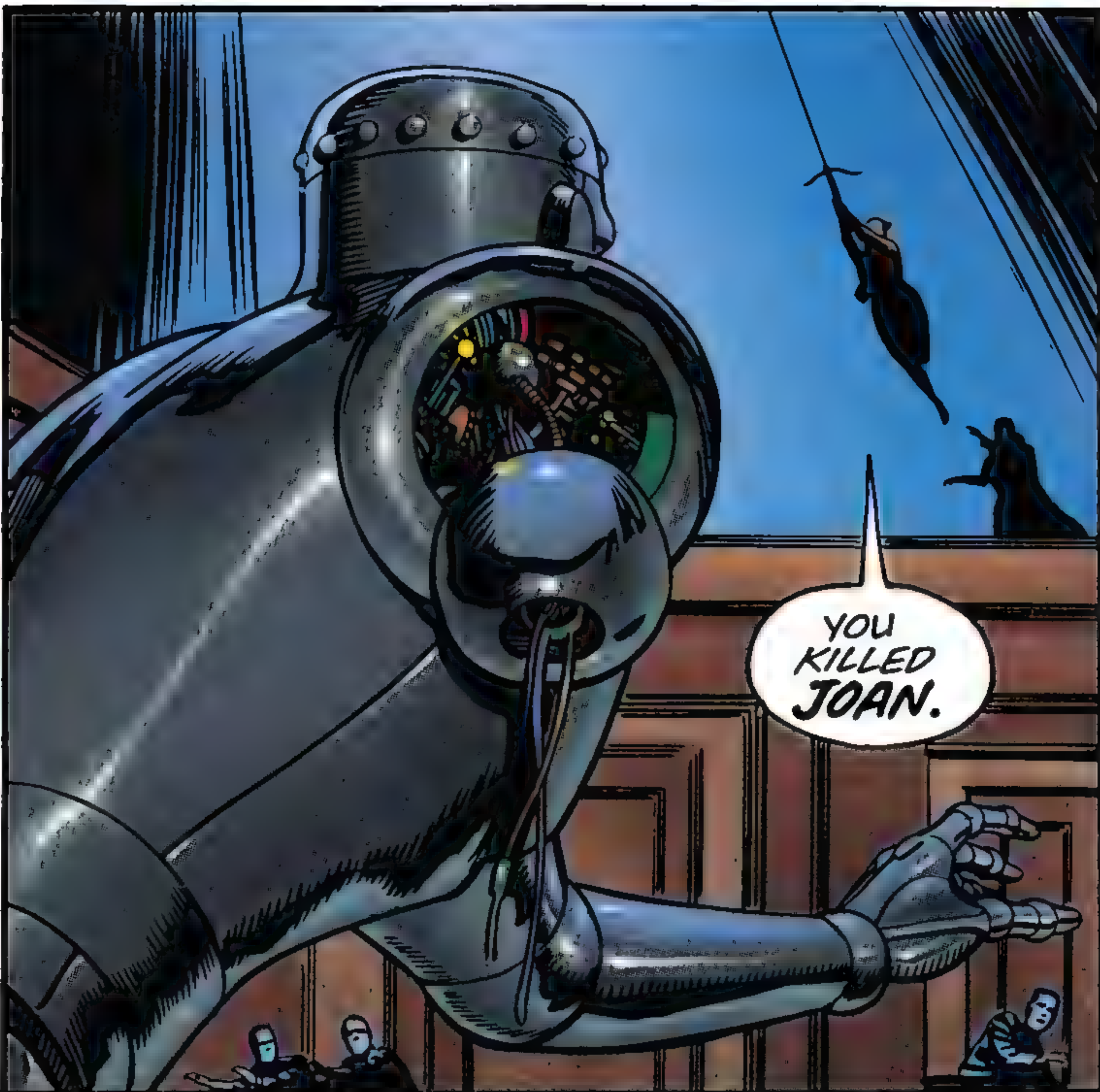
AND NOW YOU TRY... UH... TO DRAPE IT IN THE AMERICAN FLAG AND PASS IT OFF--



LADIES, GENTLEMEN. WE'LL HAVE TO POSTPONE THE REST OF THIS HEARING.

IT APPEARS A... FIRE DRILL IS TAKING PLACE.







AL... JOHNNY... YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE ME, THIS REALLY IS A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.

I'VE GOT TO GO AFTER DANNY... REASON WITH HIM.

GET HOURMAN, HE'S OBVIOUSLY A RED... WHOLE THING SMACKS OF A COMMIE TRICK. FIND OUT WHO HE'S IN LEAGUE WITH. STOP THEM.

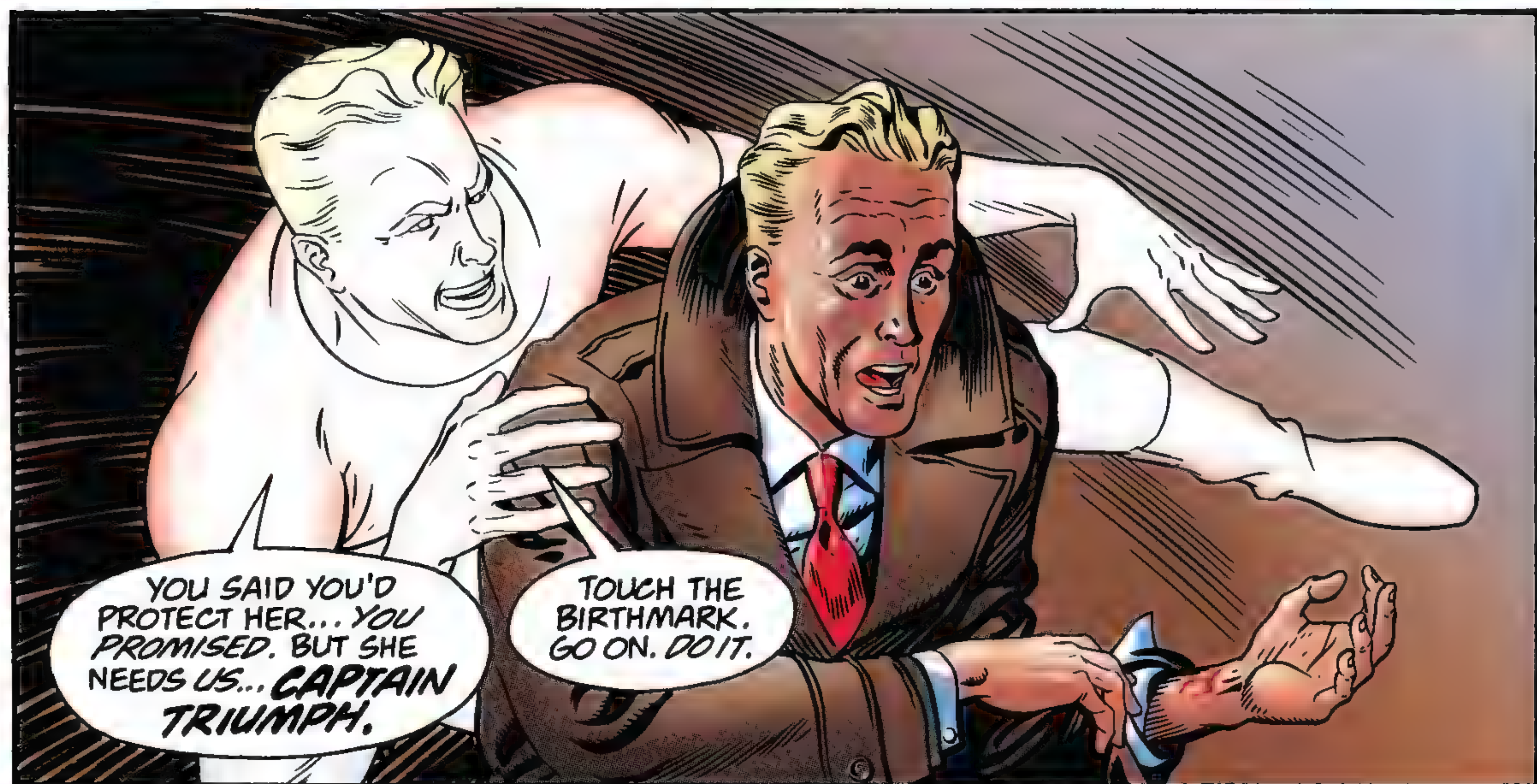


YOU HEARD HIM. IT'S ALL A MISTAKE.

YEAH, IT'S GOTTA BE A MISTAKE.

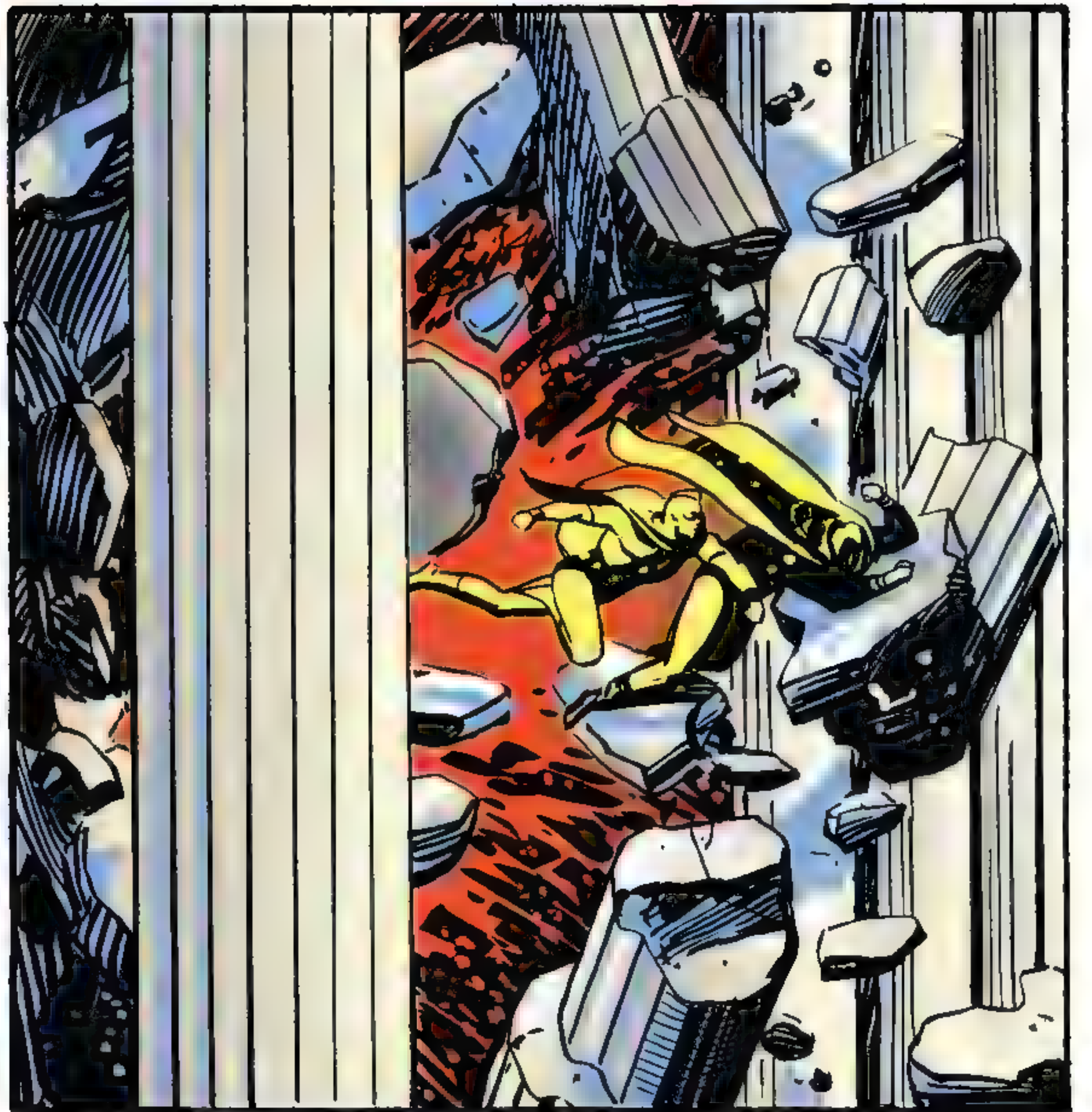


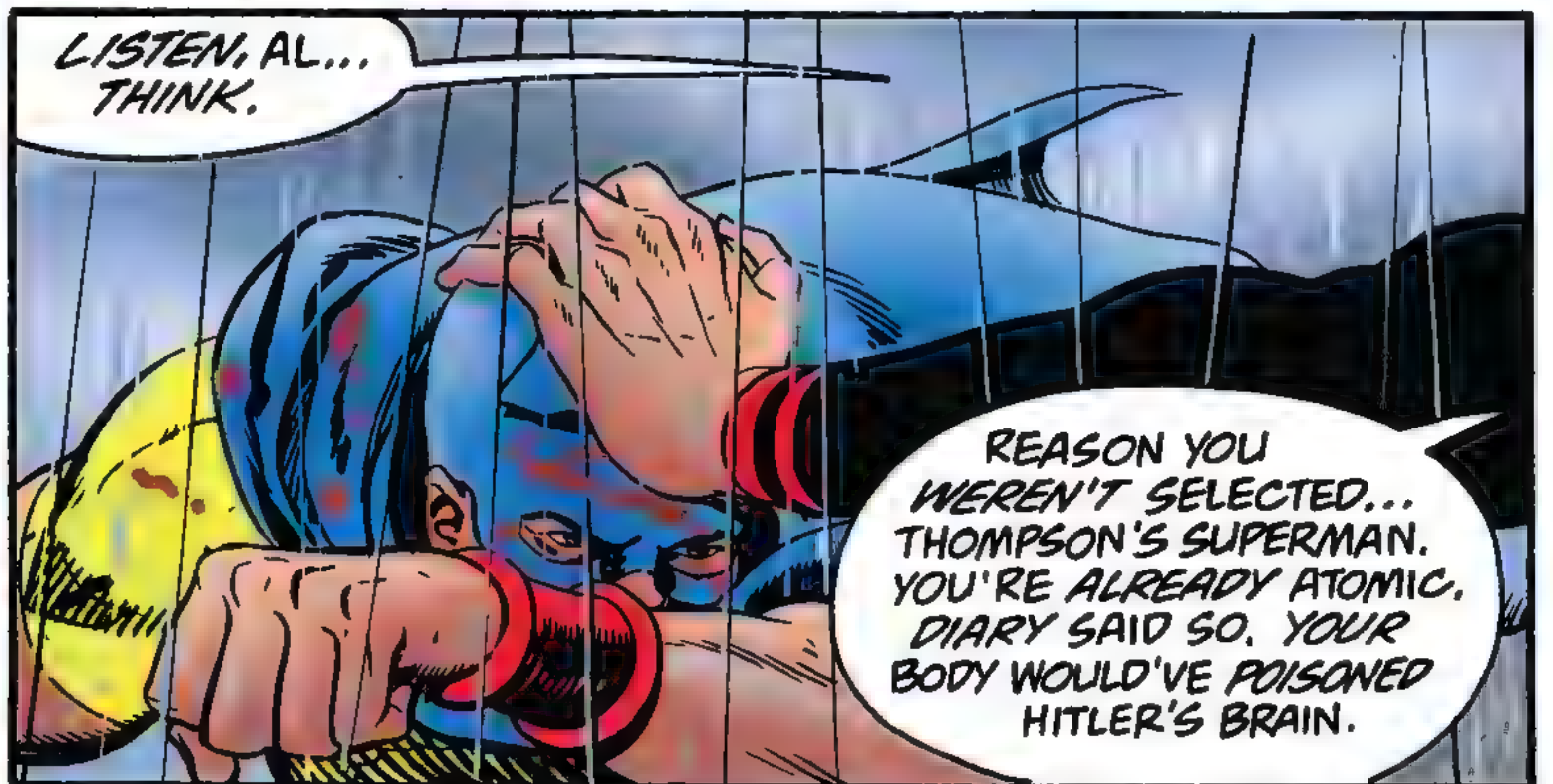
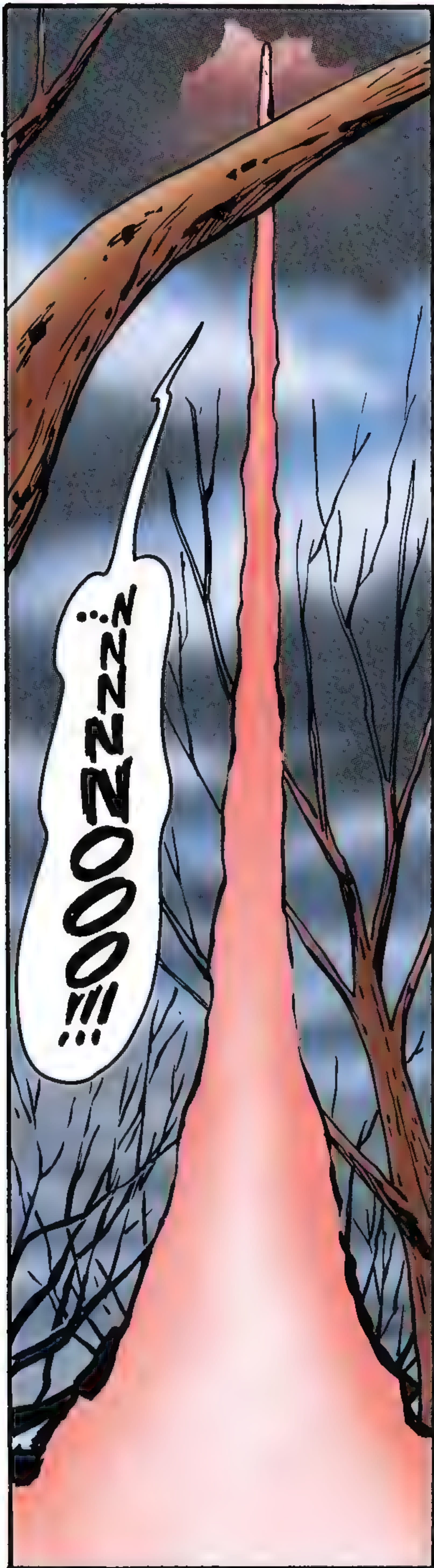
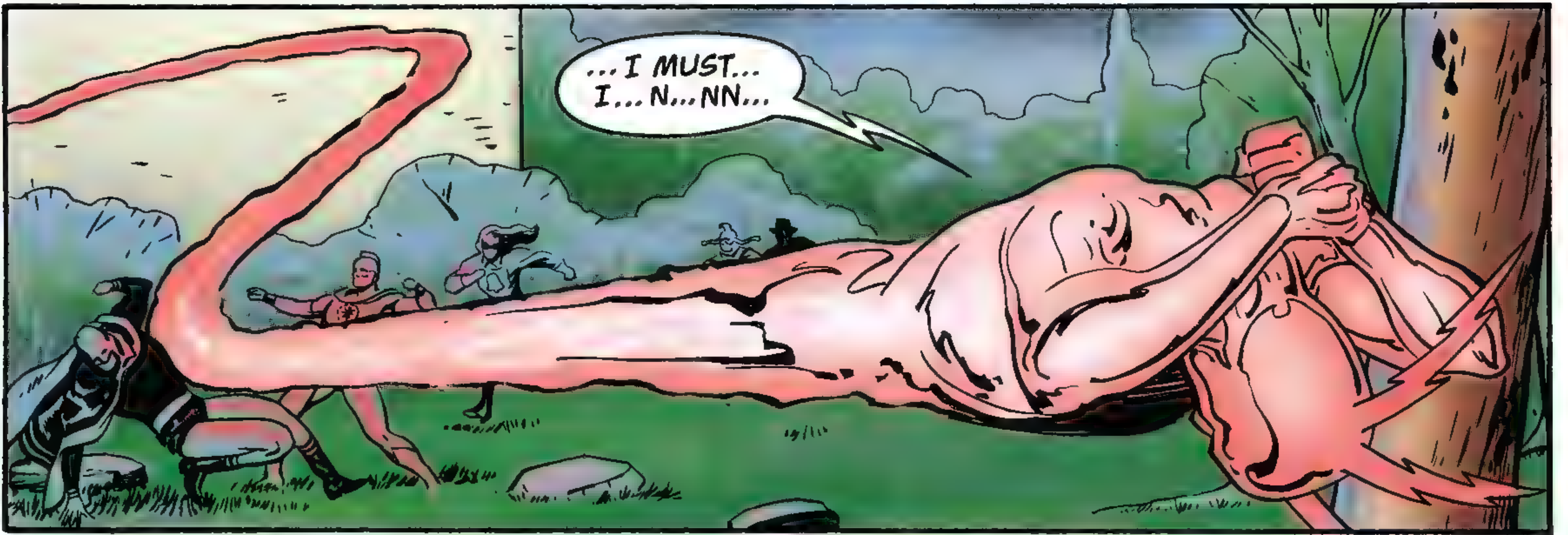
IT'S GOTTA.

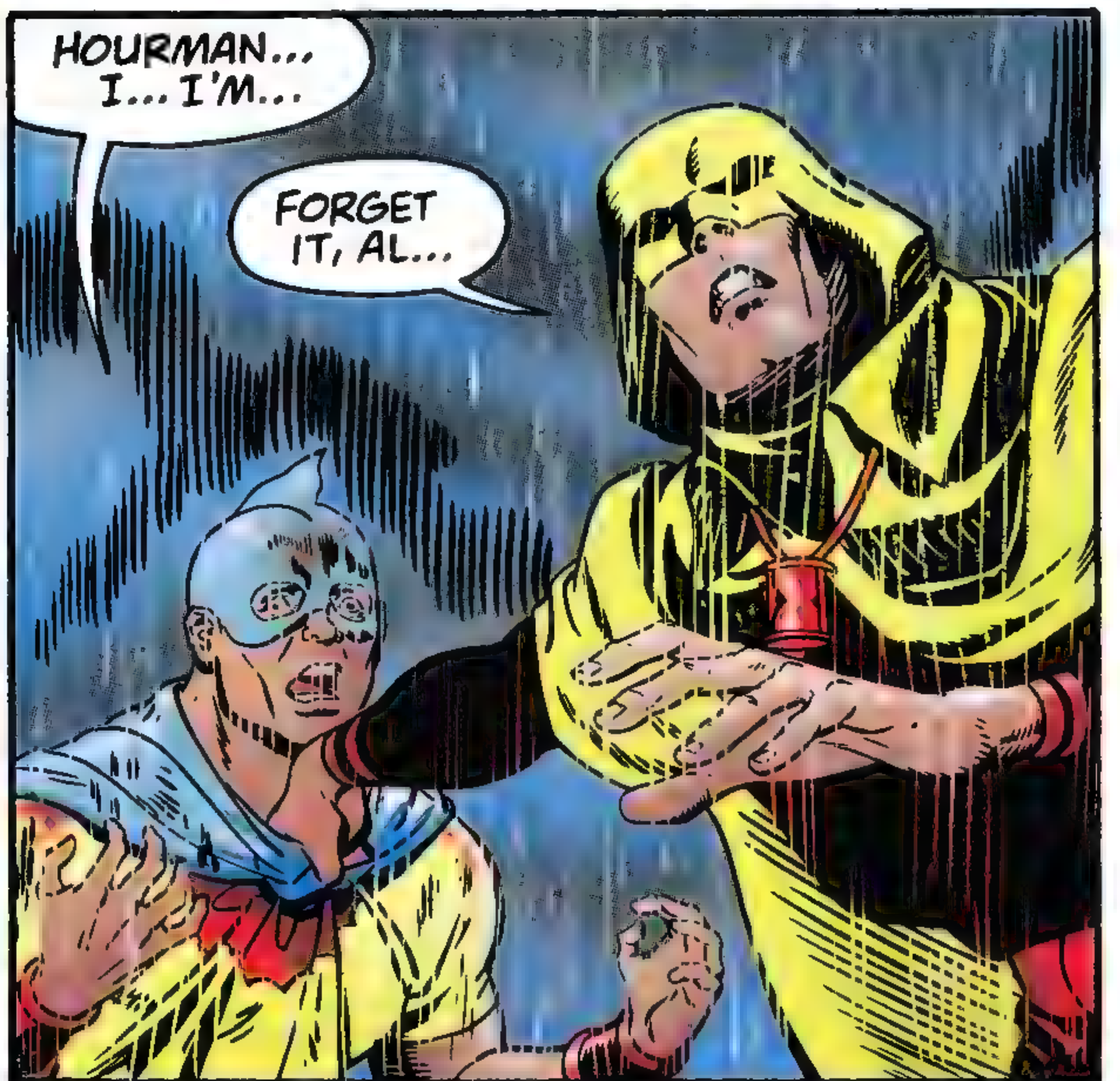


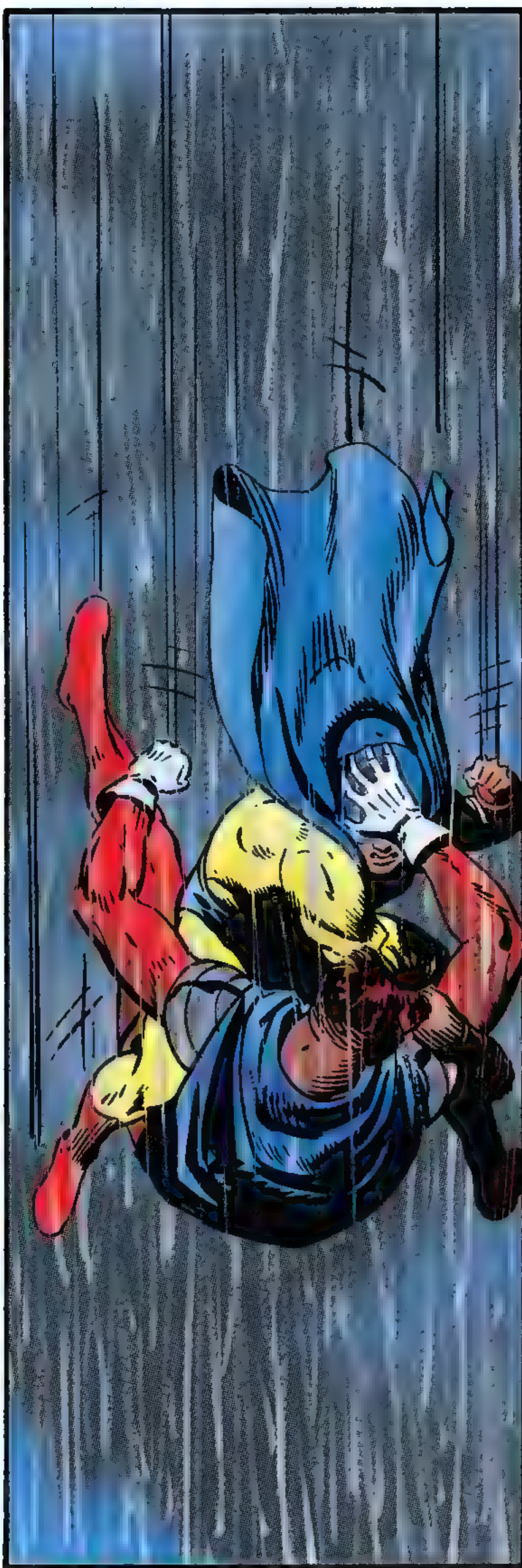
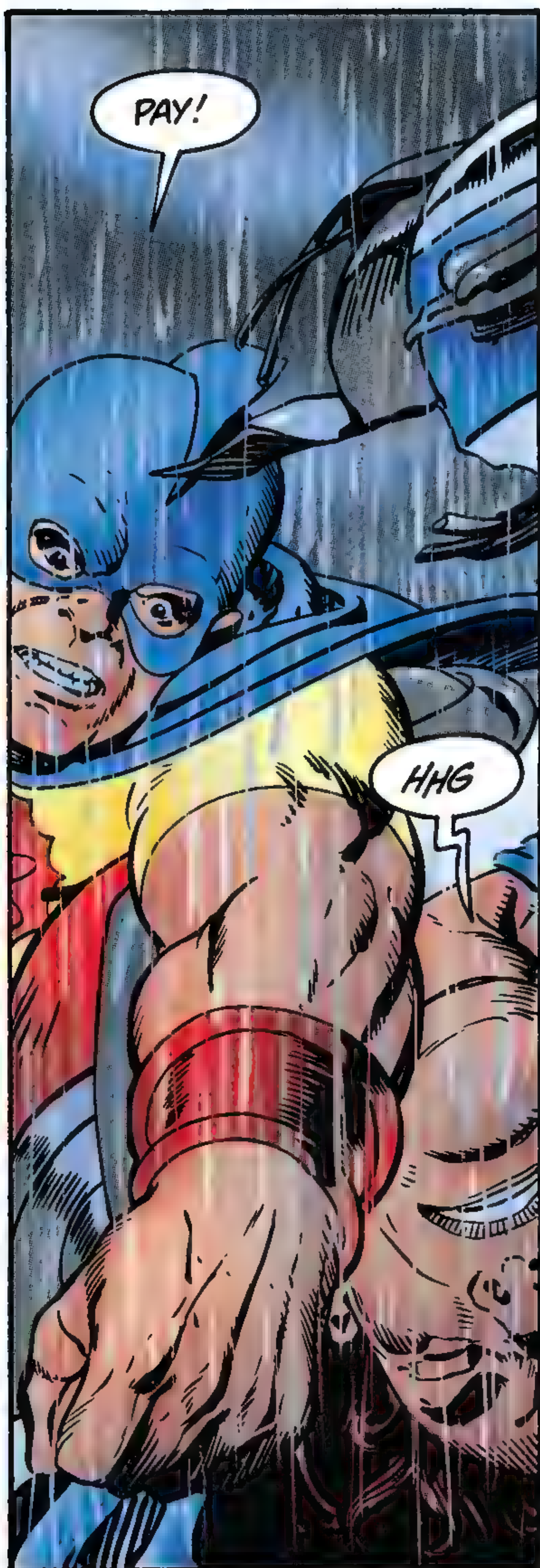
YOU SAID YOU'D PROTECT HER... YOU PROMISED. BUT SHE NEEDS US... **CAPTAIN TRIUMPH.**

TOUCH THE BIRTHMARK. GO ON. DO IT.

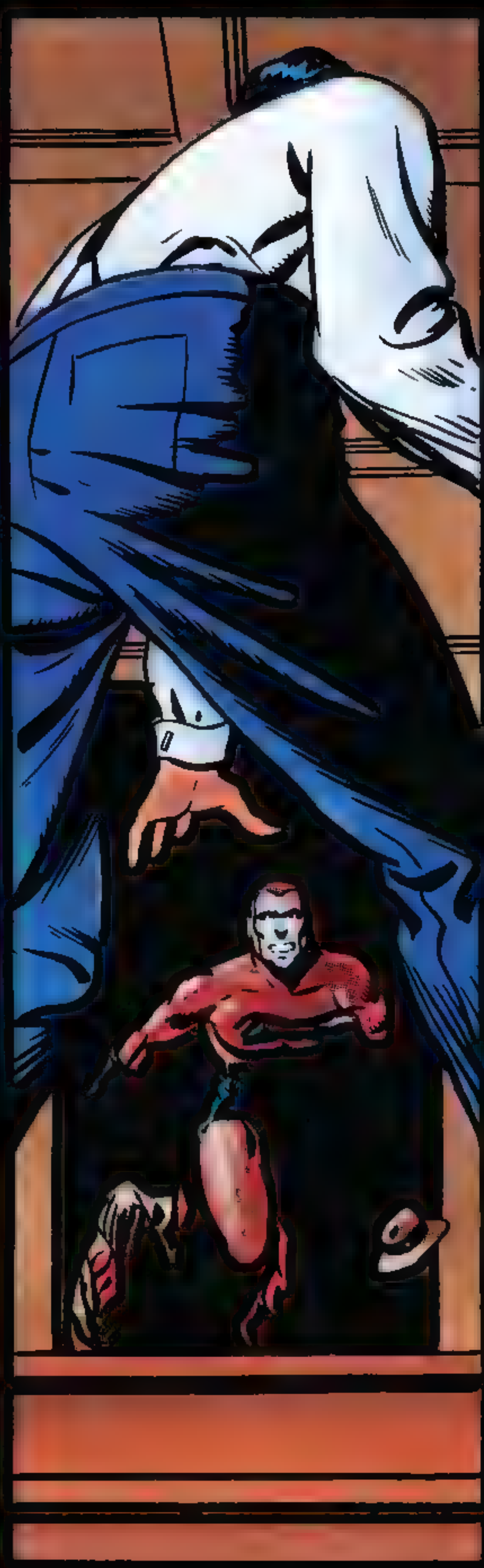


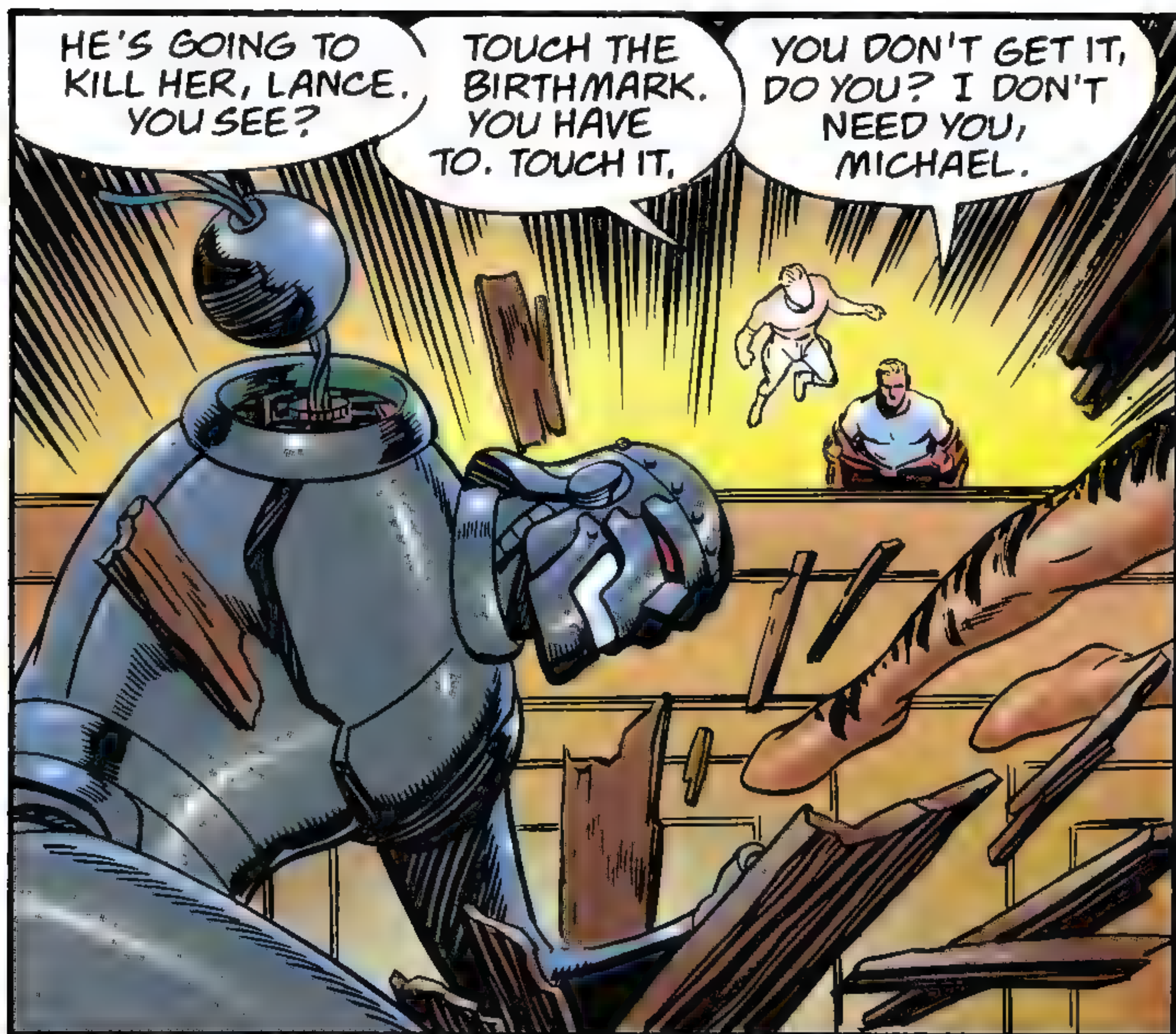


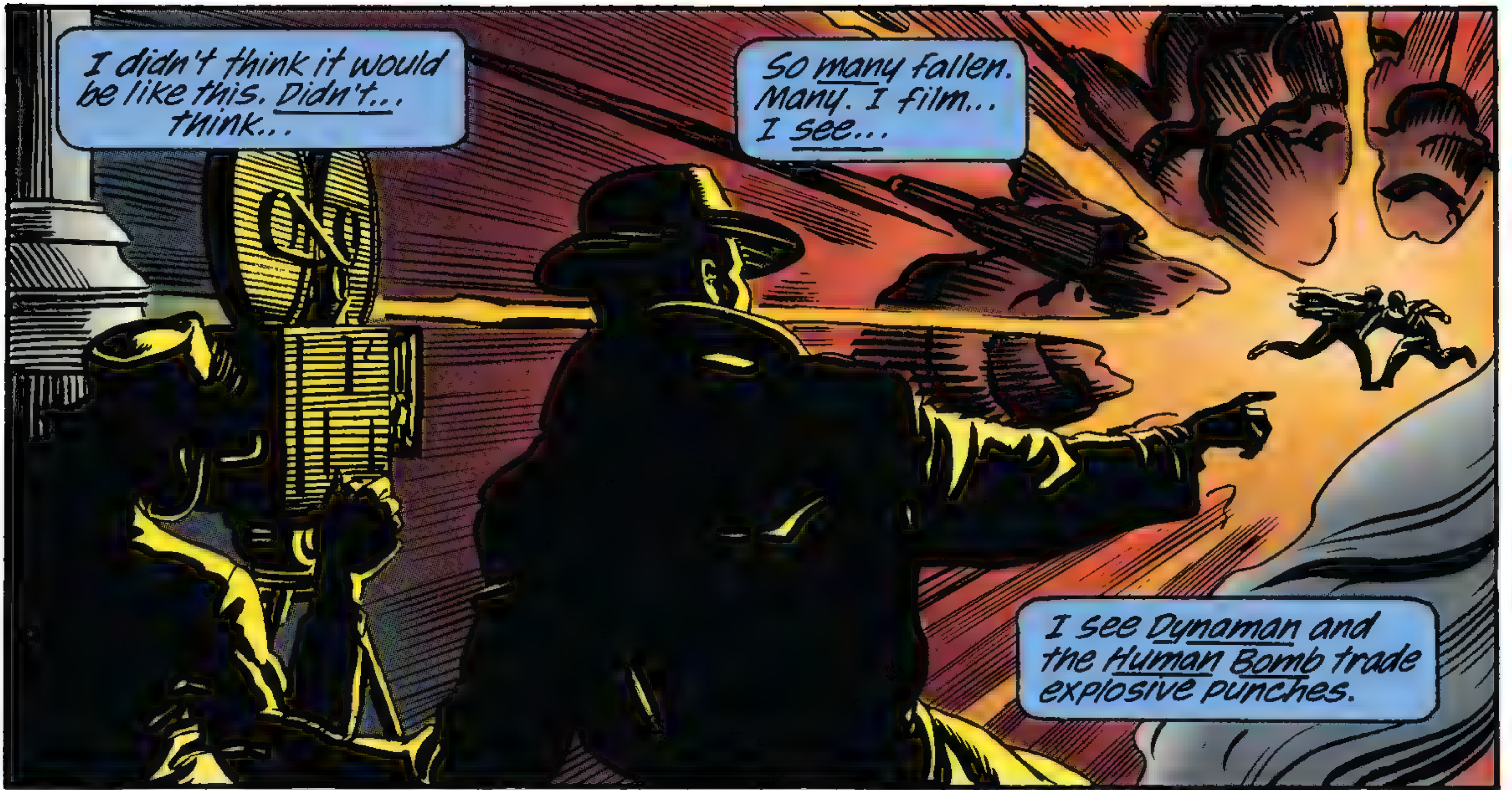












I didn't think it would be like this. Didn't... think...

So many fallen. Many. I film... I see...

I see Dynamman and the Human Bomb trade explosive punches.



Twenty blows into the fight... I see its Victor.

SO MANY FALLEN...



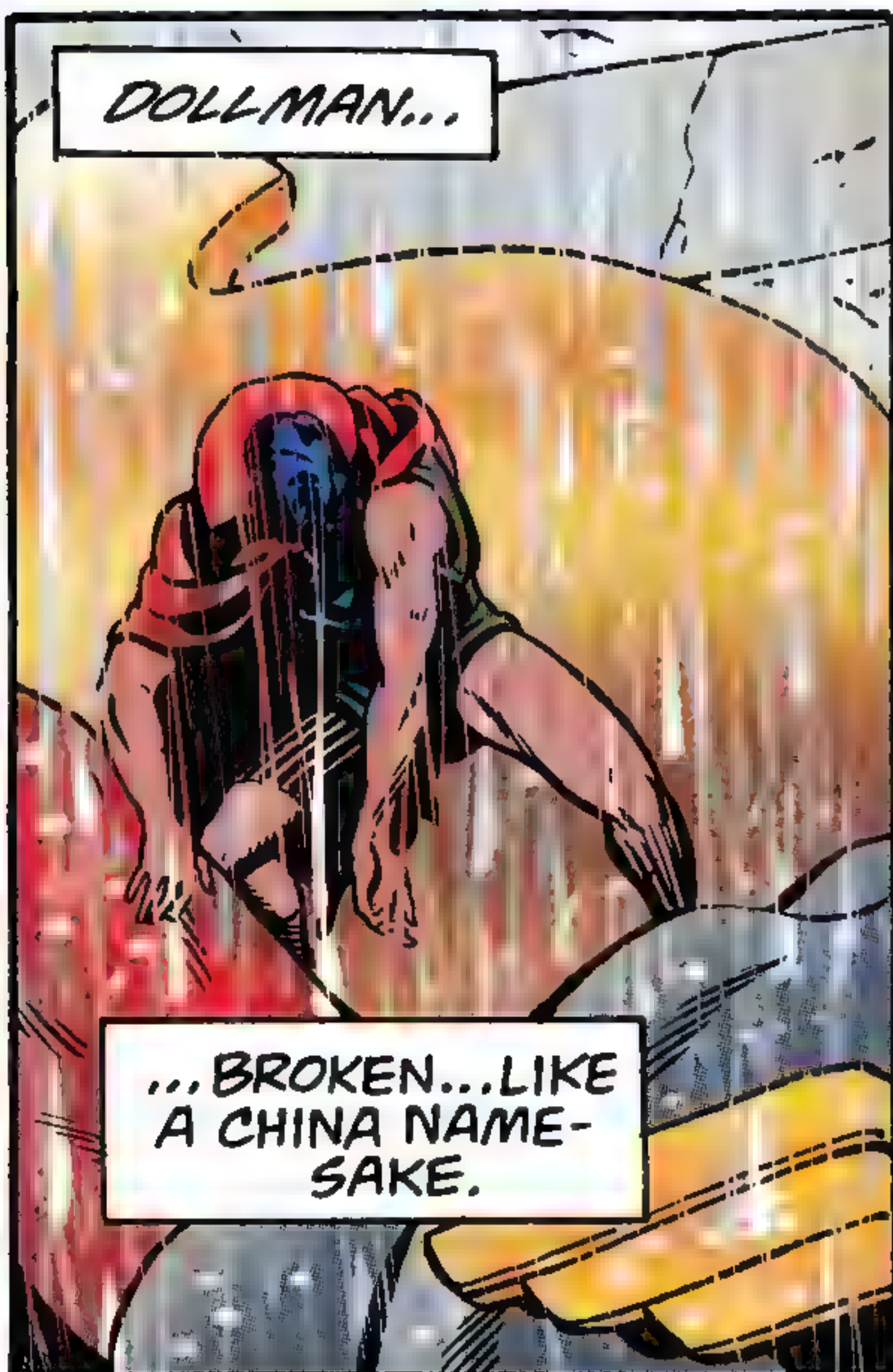
WITHOUT HIS GOGGLES HE CANNOT SEE. WITHOUT THEM HE'S USELESS.

DR. MID-NITE, A BLIND MAN... DESPERATE NOT TO STUMBLE.



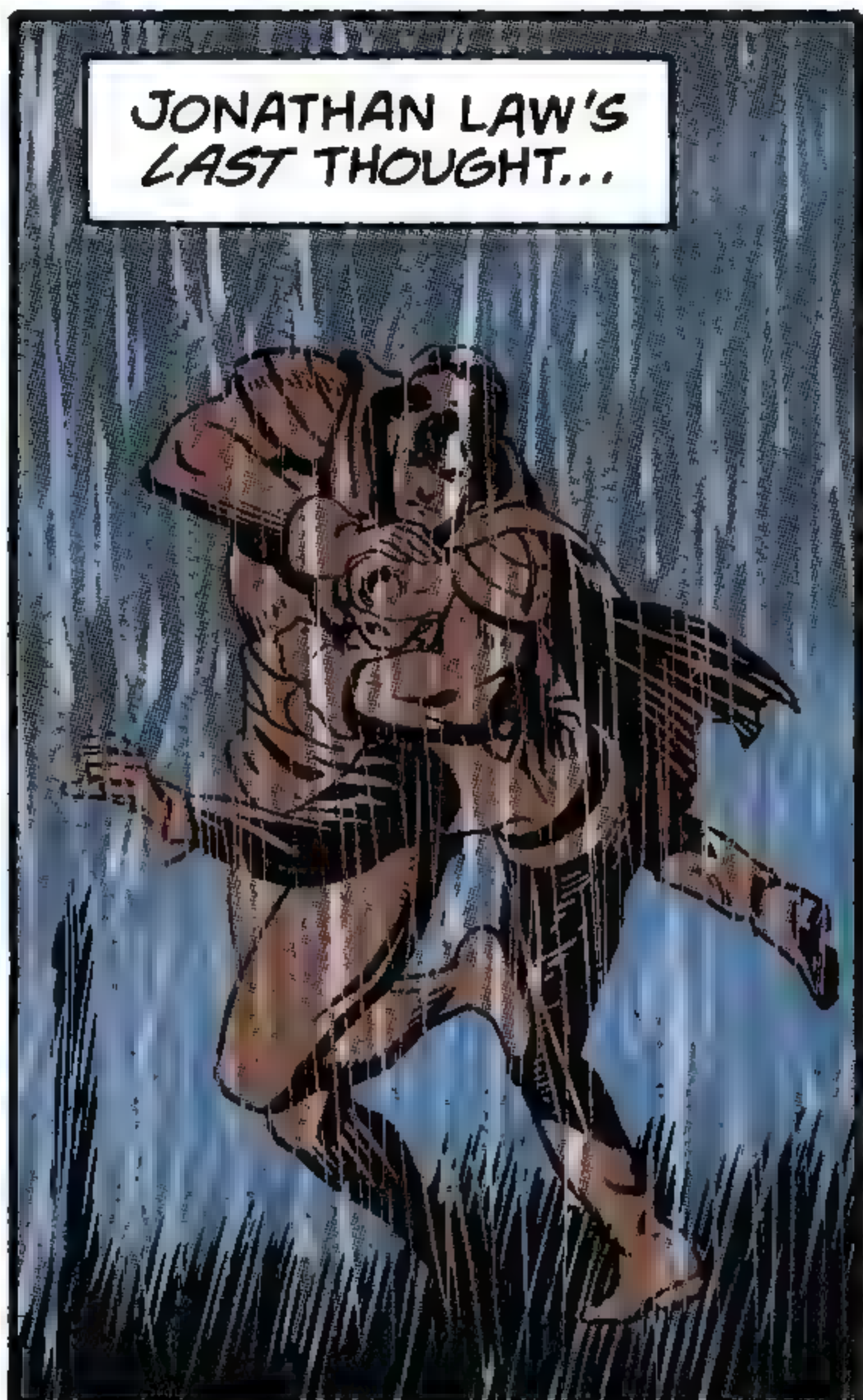
ONCE, DURING THE WAR, THE RED BEE HAD A STRANGE DREAM WHERE HE DIED.

SEVEN YEARS LATER THE DREAM COMES TRUE.

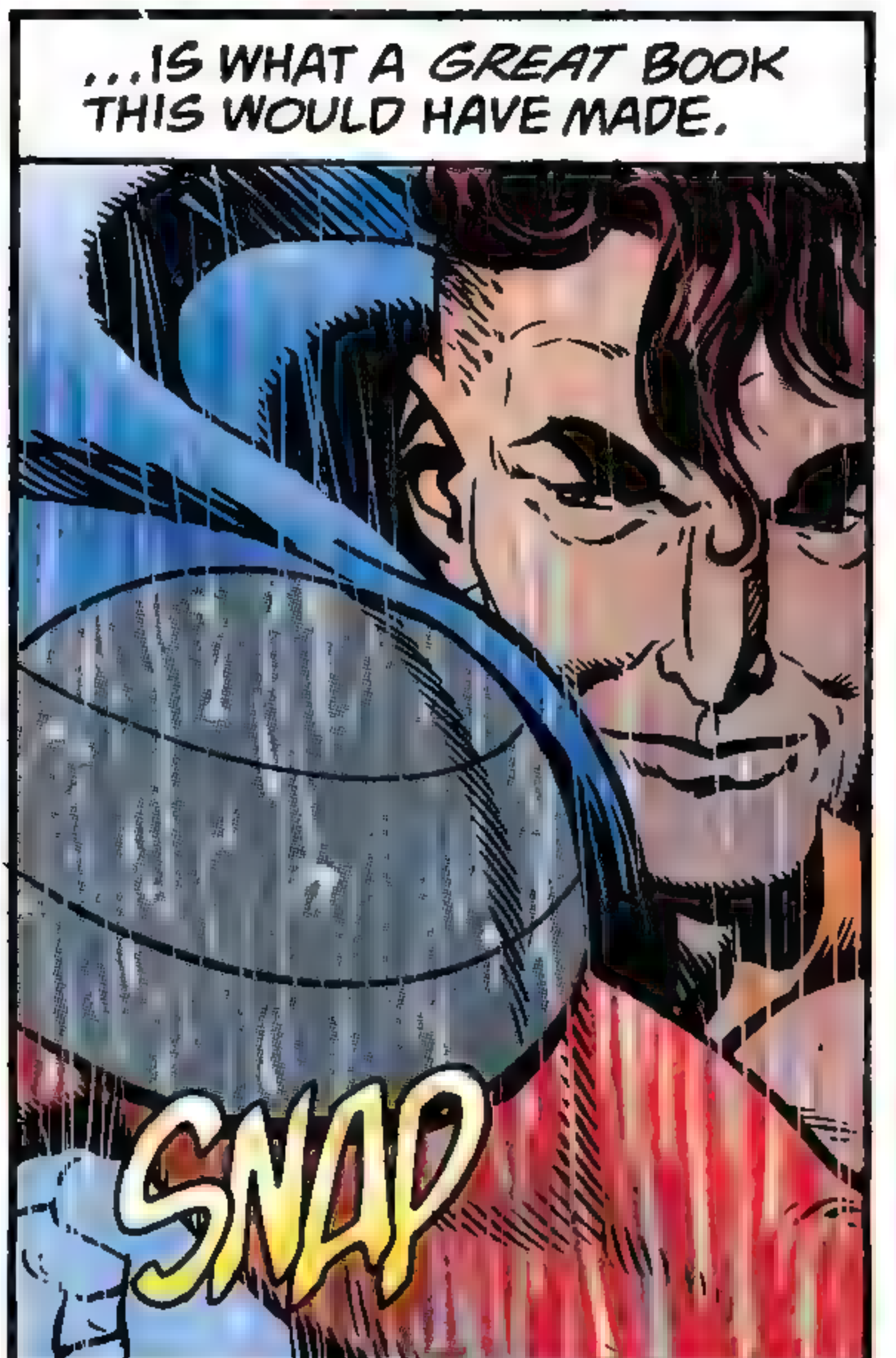


DOLLMAN...

...BROKEN...LIKE A CHINA NAME-SAKE.

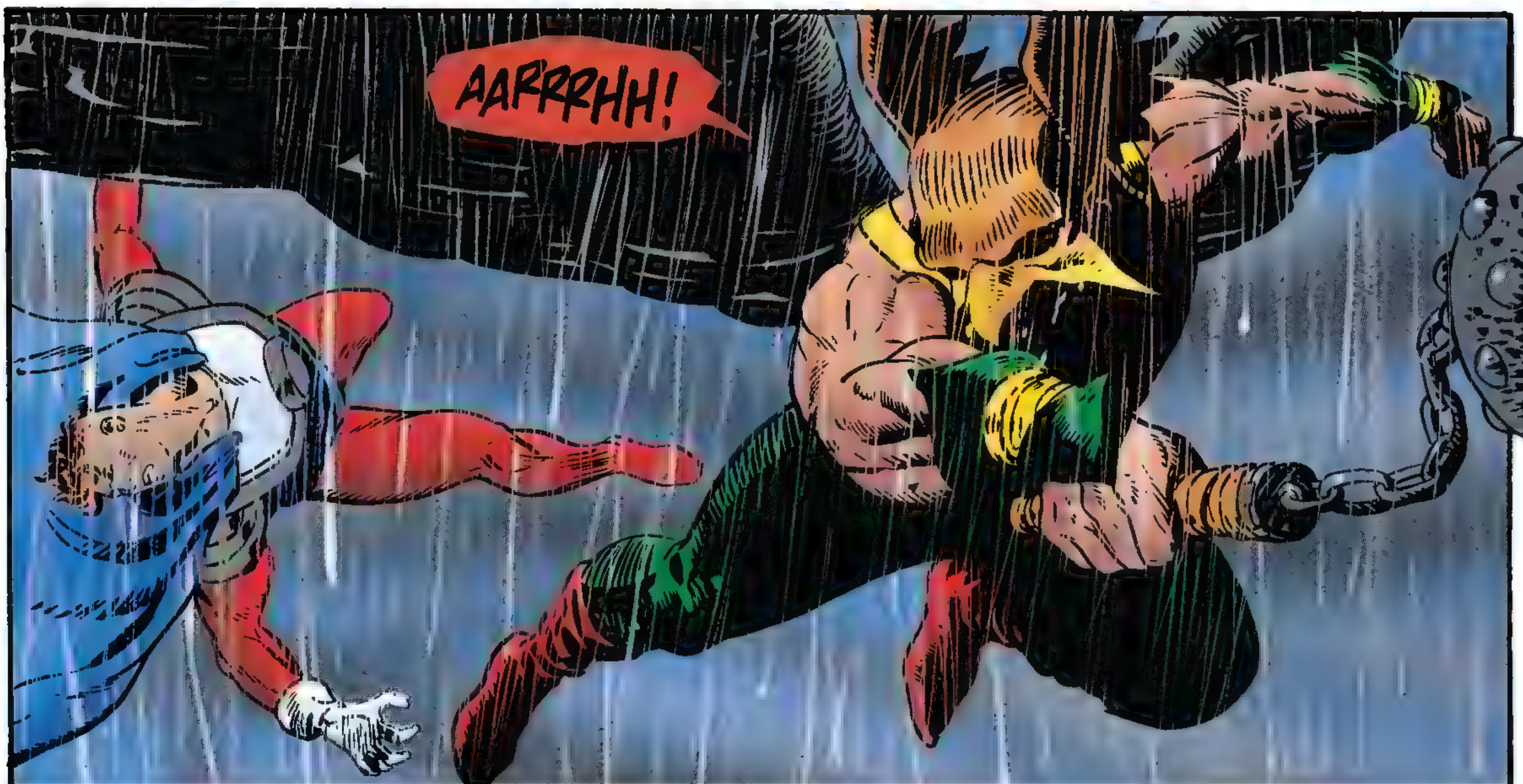
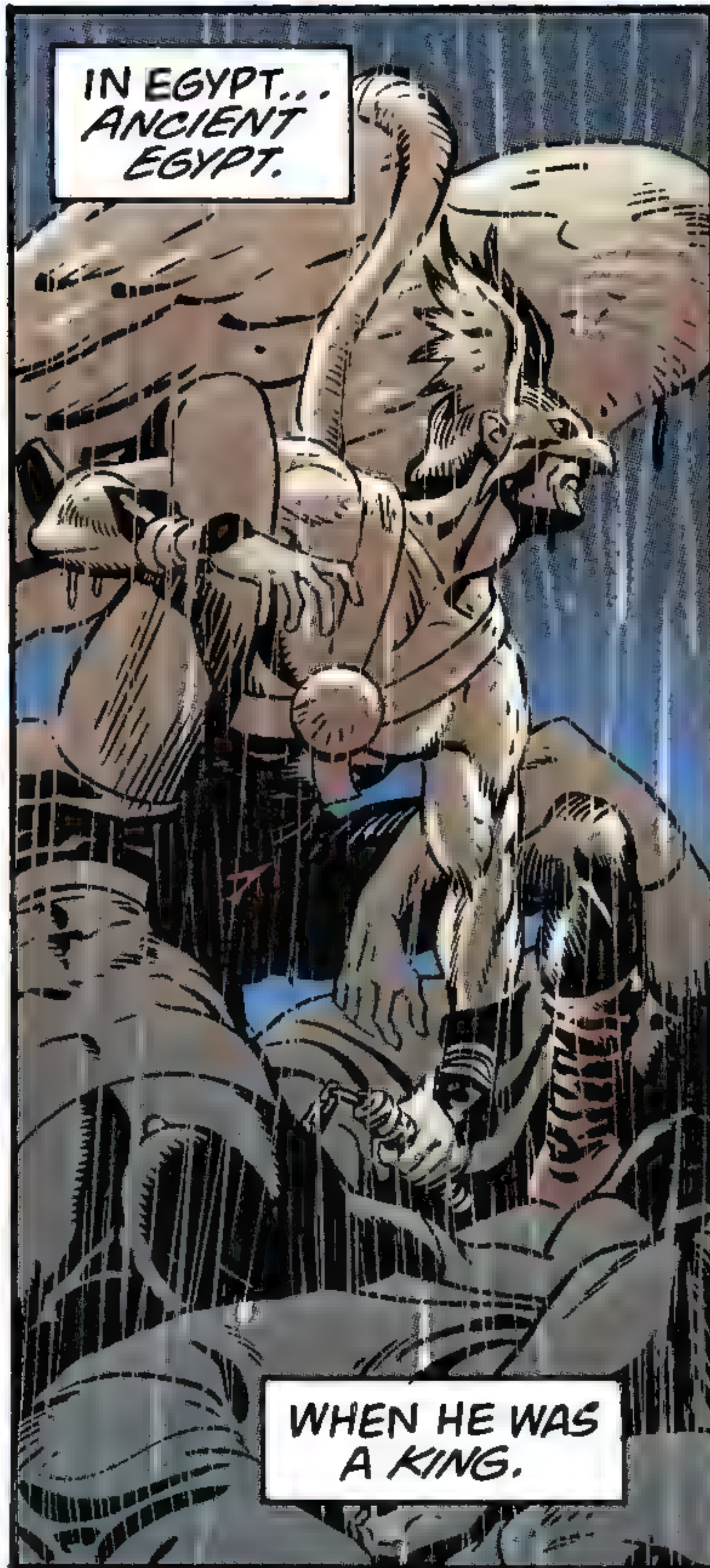
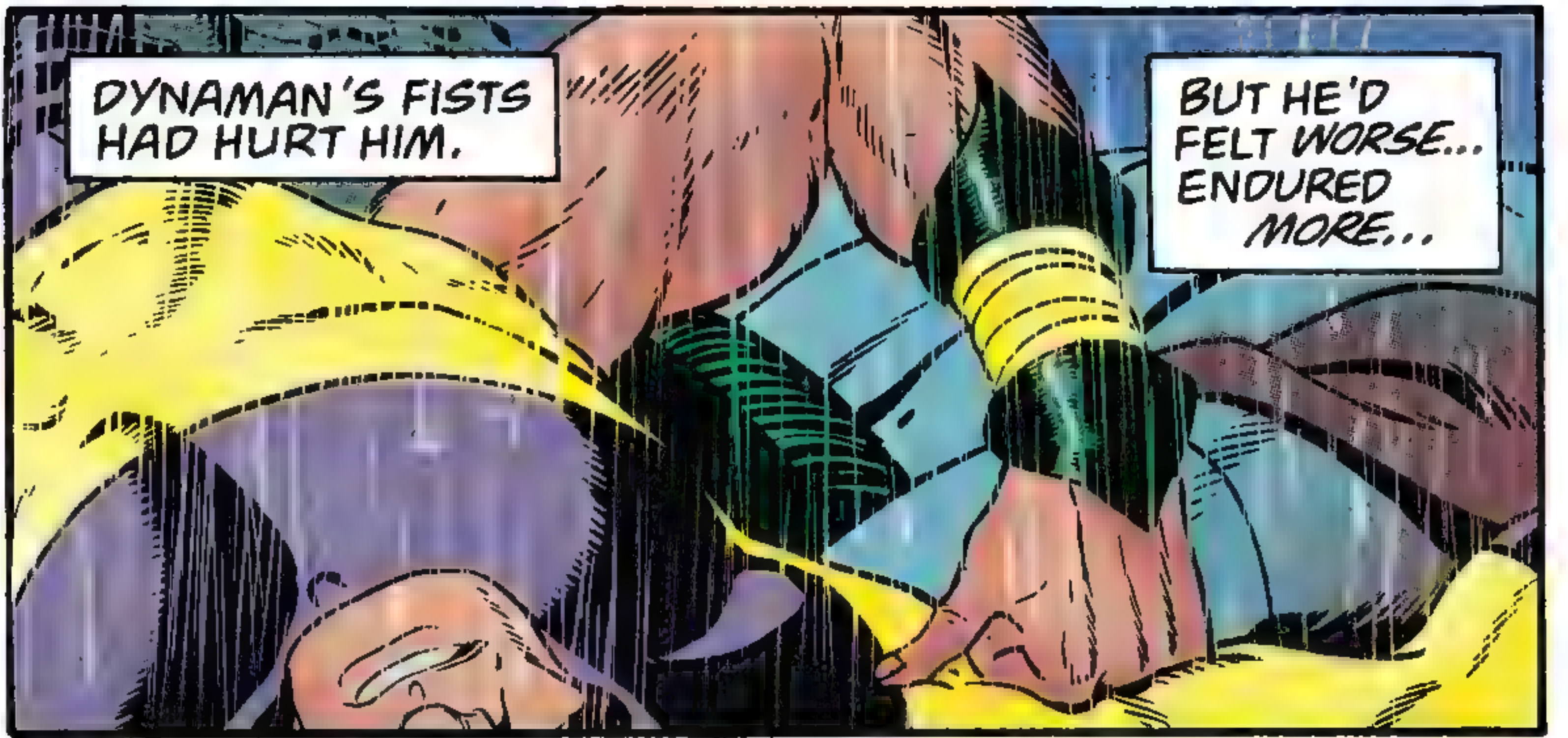


JONATHAN LAW'S LAST THOUGHT...



...IS WHAT A GREAT BOOK THIS WOULD HAVE MADE.

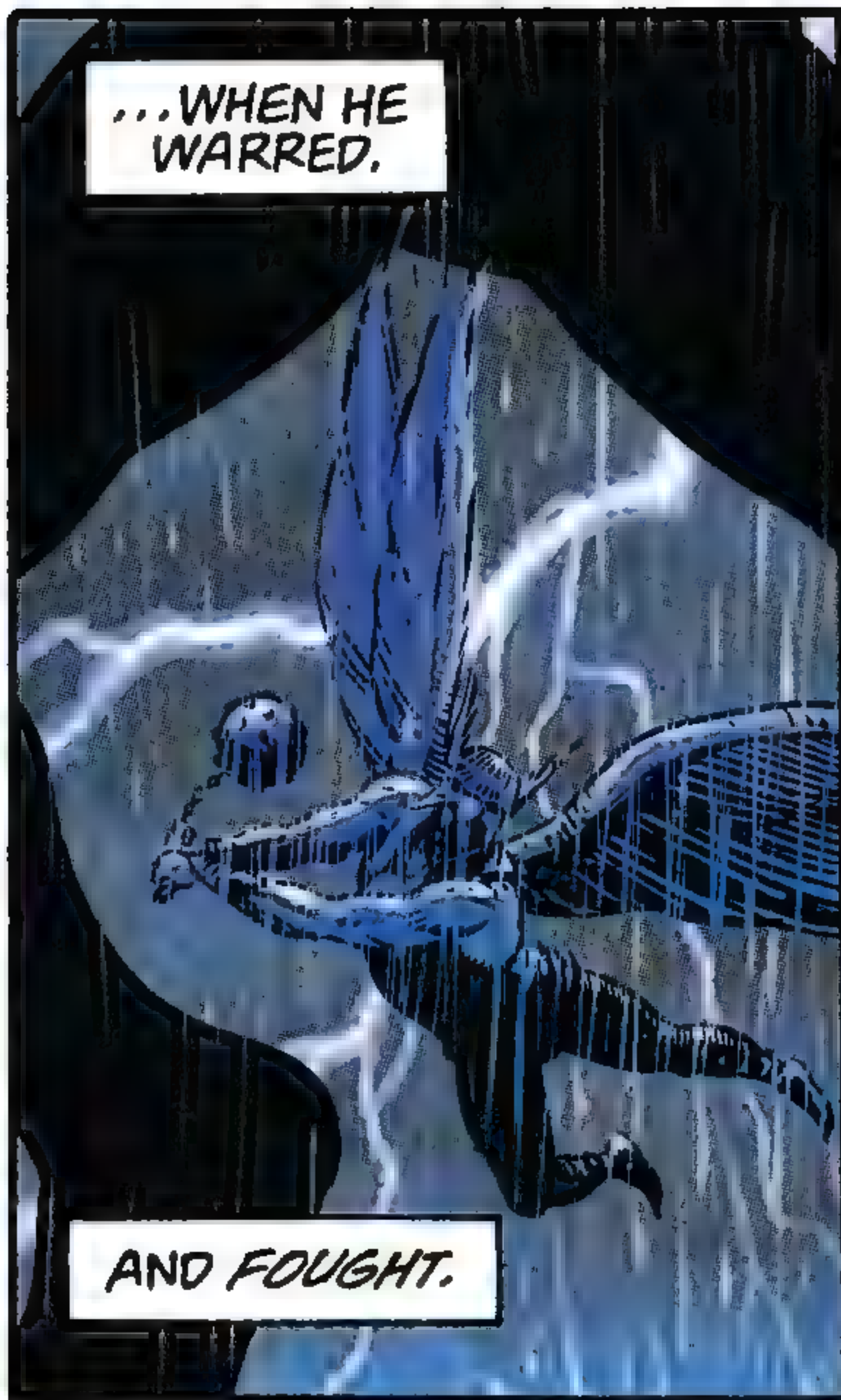
SNAP





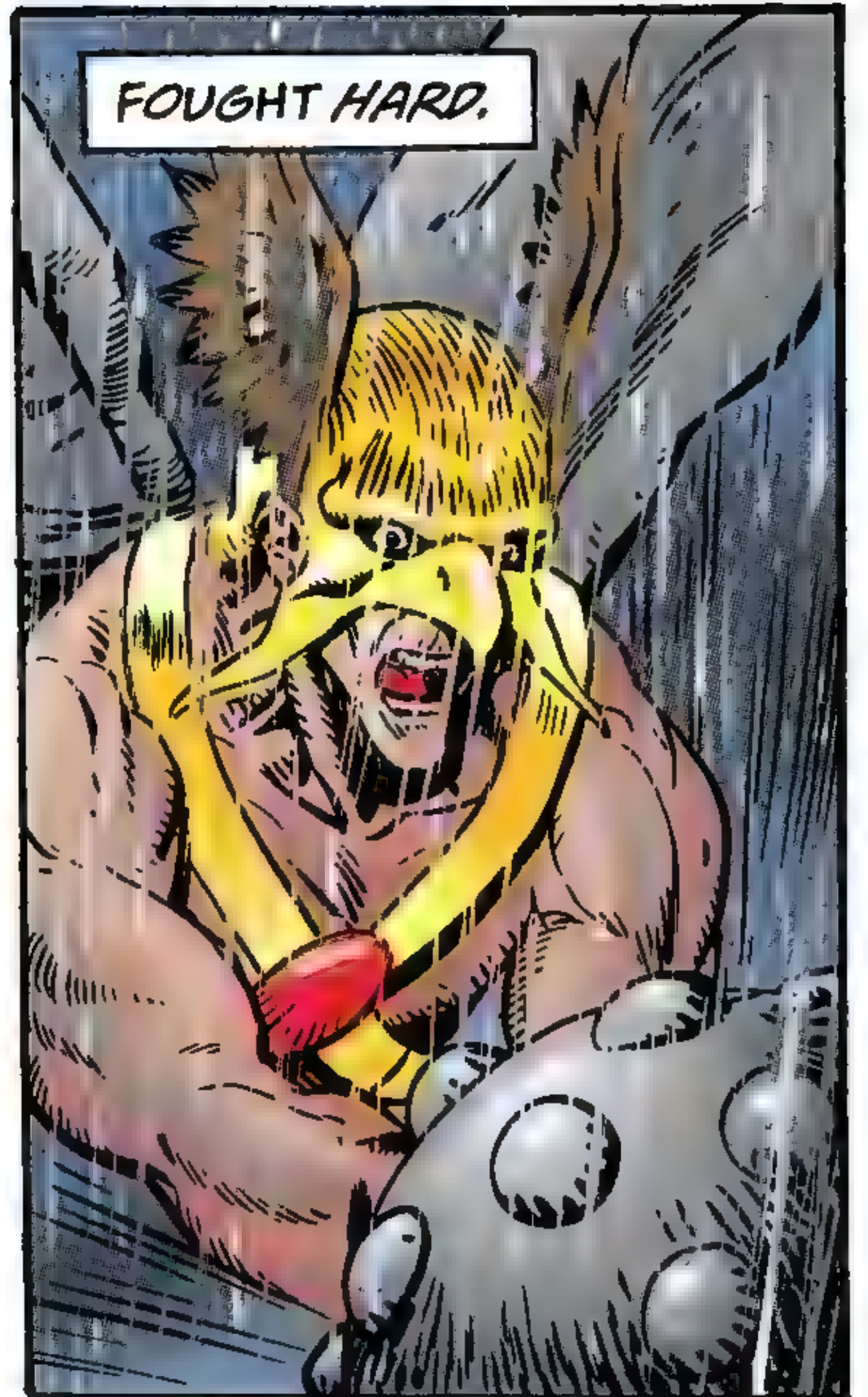
HE'S LIKE A SAVAGE...
HAWKMAN...

... HE'S
DOING IT...
BEATING...



...WHEN HE
WARRED.

AND FOUGHT.



FOUGHT HARD.



OF COURSE... THAT
WAS A LONG TIME
AGO.



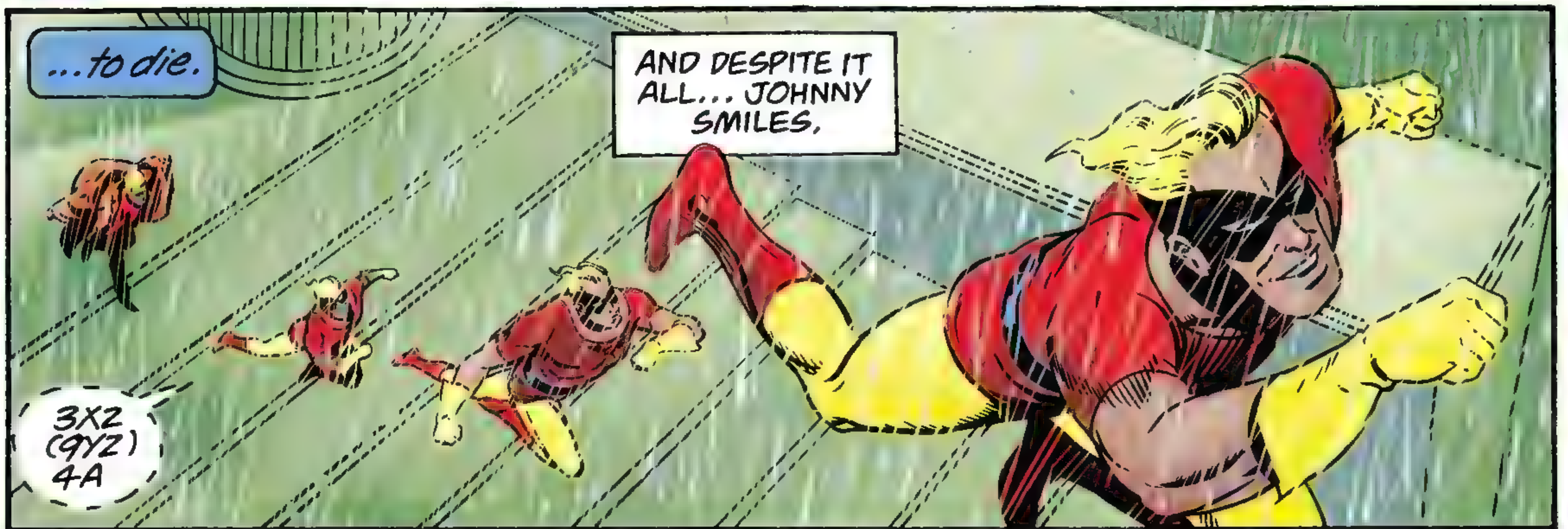
AND ON THE GROUND, A
SCARED YOUNG MAN...
MAKES THE BUTTERFLIES
IN HIS STOMACH DON
THEIR ARMOR AND
PREPARE FOR BATTLE.

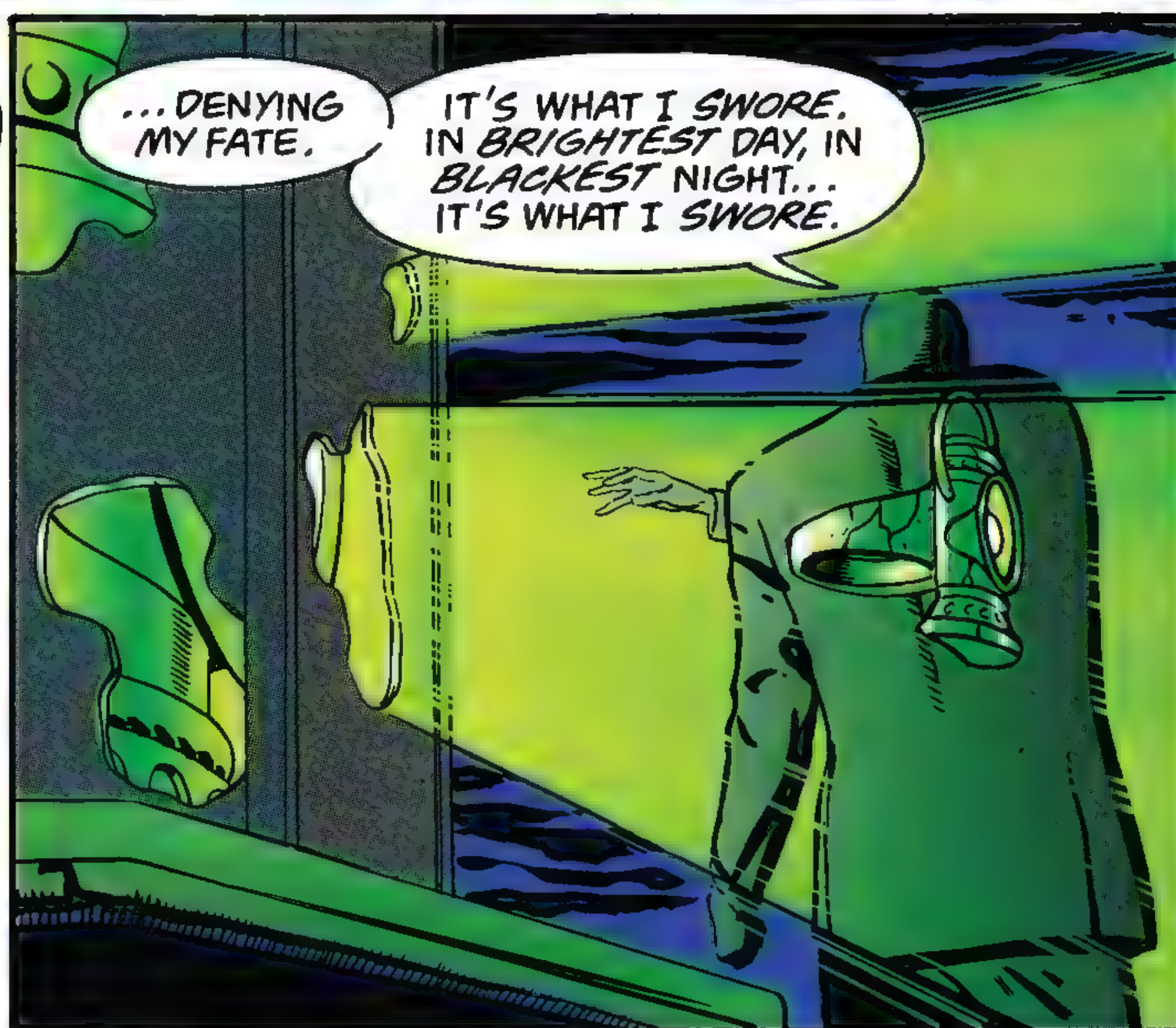
HEY, TUBBY,
THE KID... FILM
HIM. HE'S--

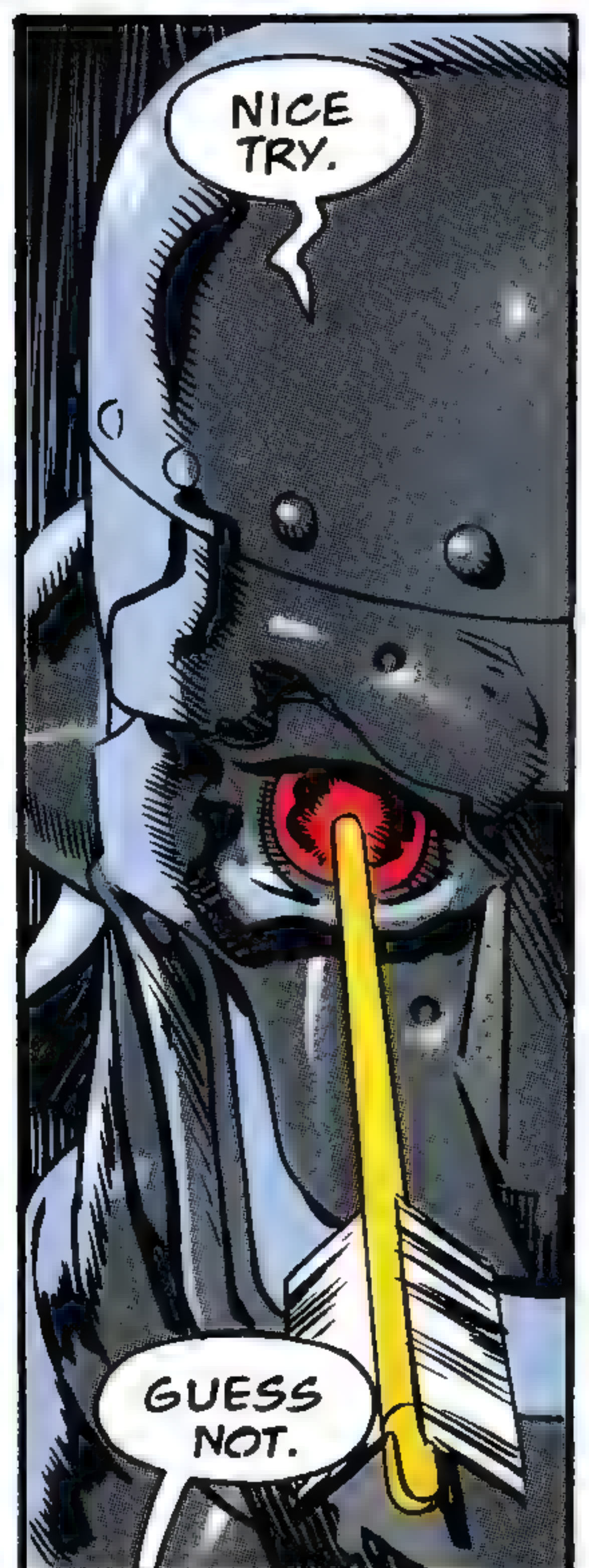
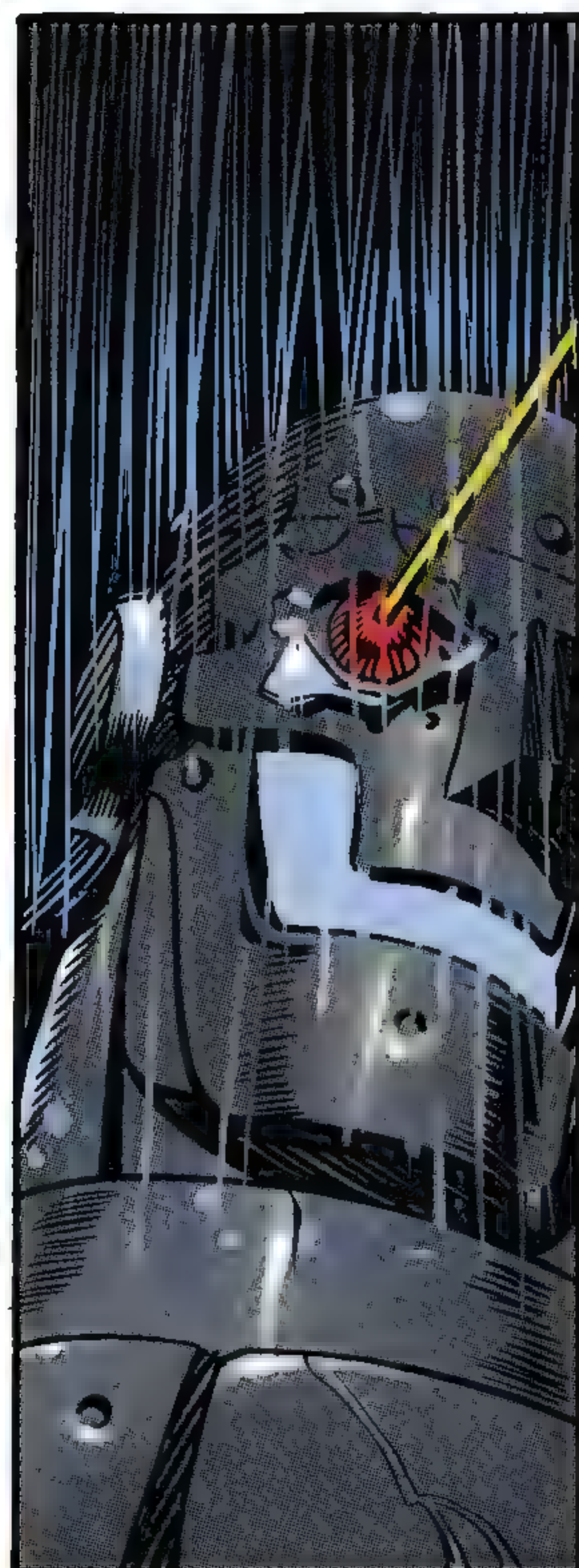
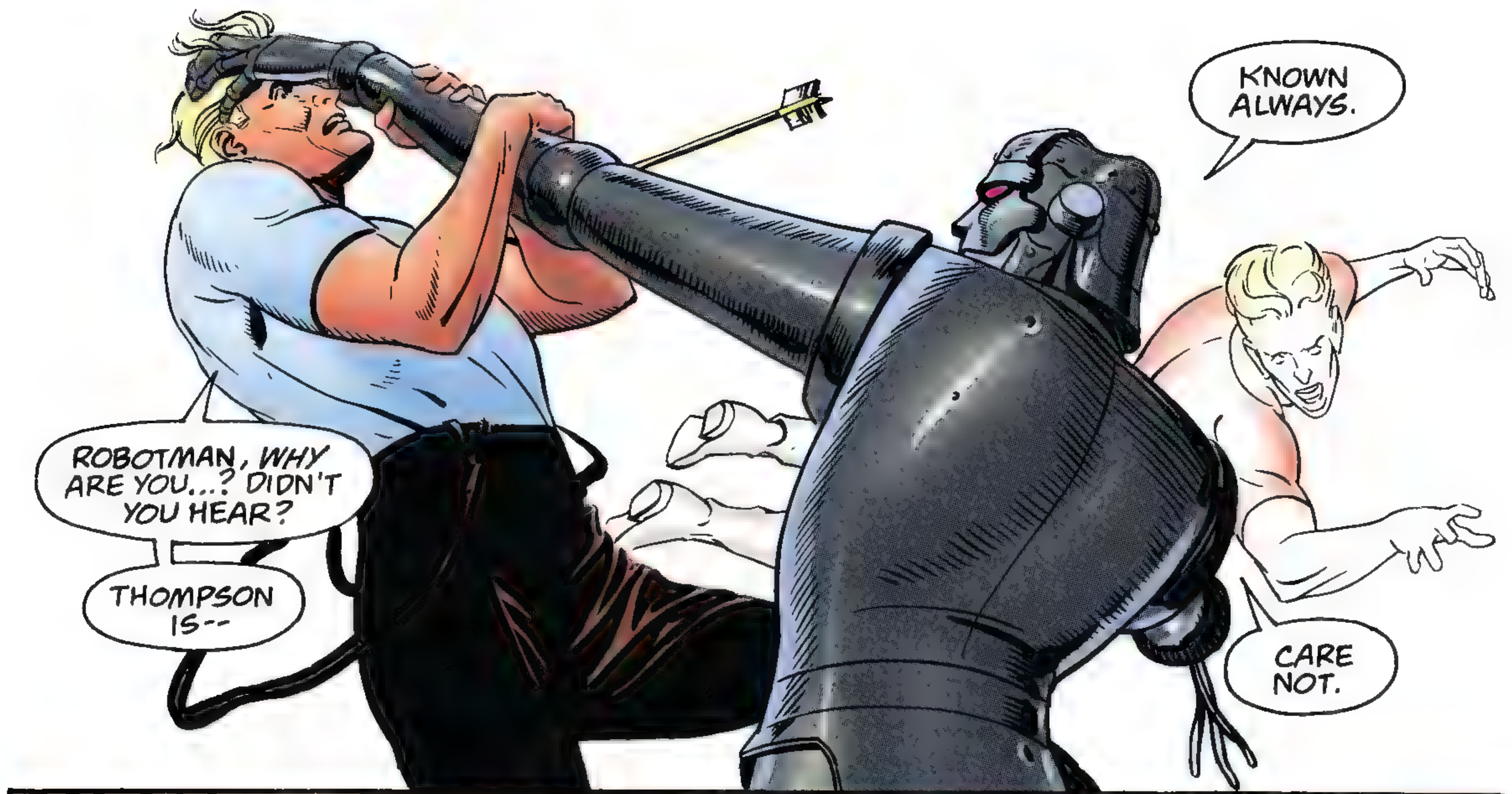


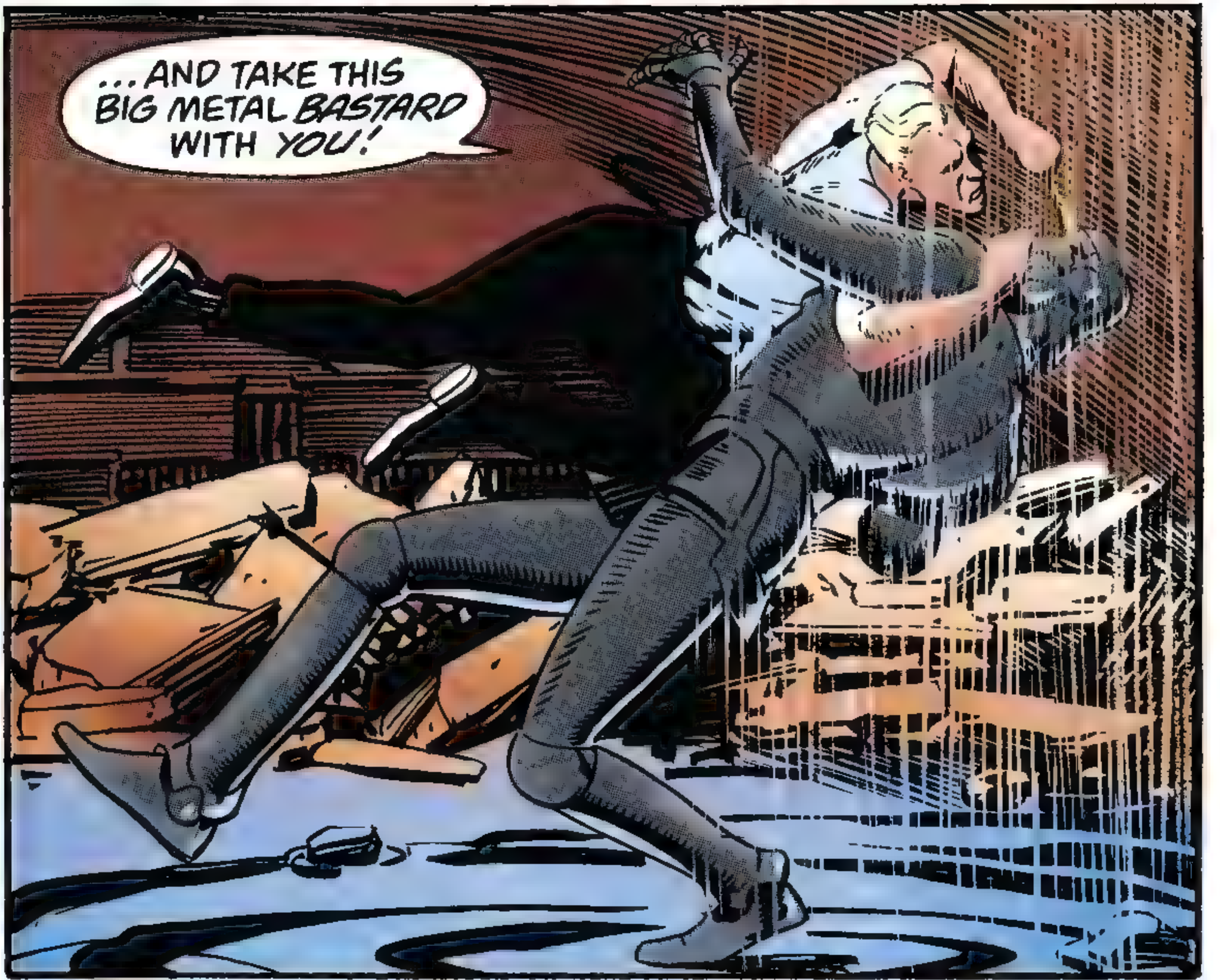
A HERO.

TIME TO
PROVE I--











JOHNNY...



...IT'S ME.
I'M HERE.

LIBBY?

HOW...



WE
NEED A
MIRACLE.

...ARE WE
DOING?

HEY...



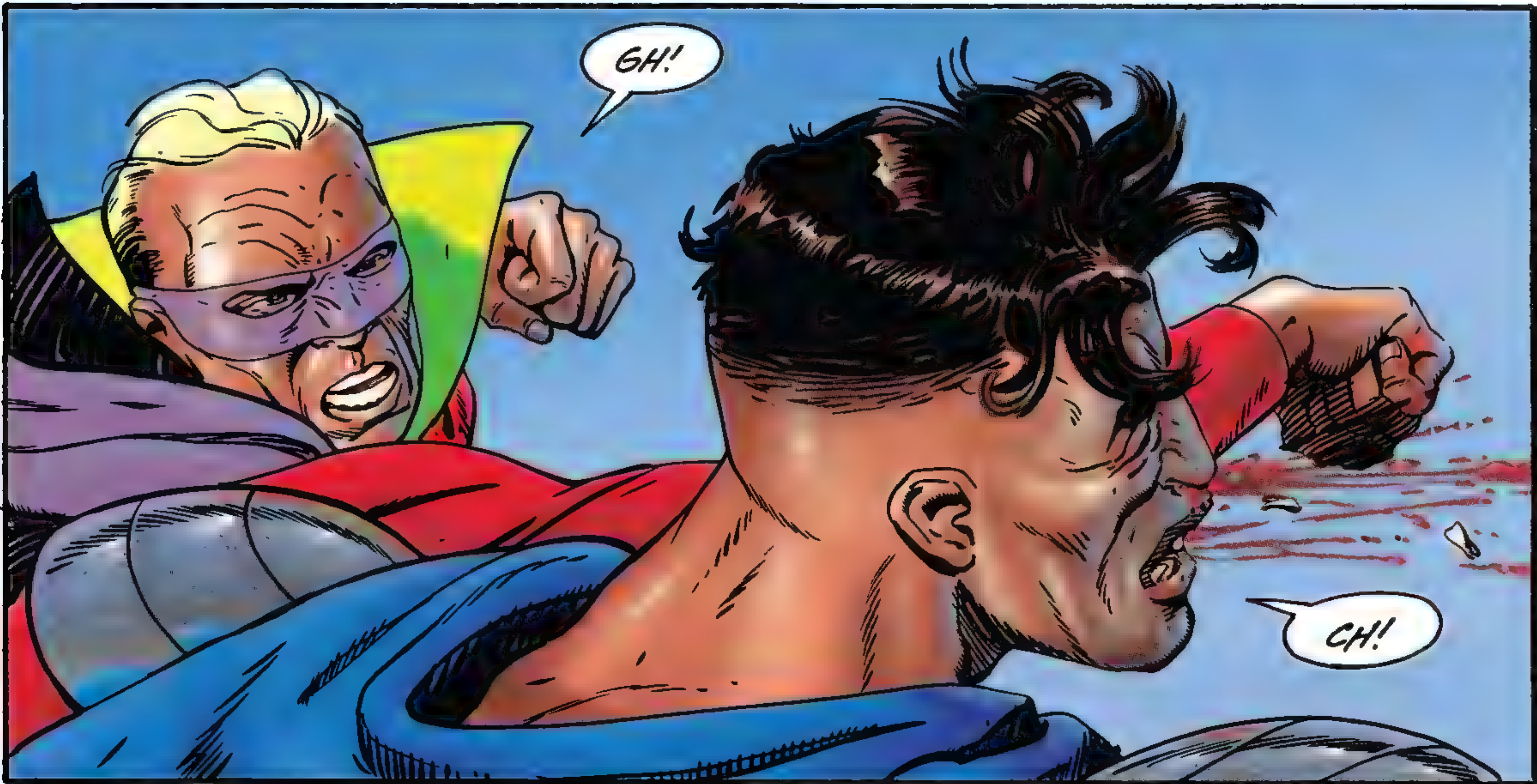
...VILLAIN.

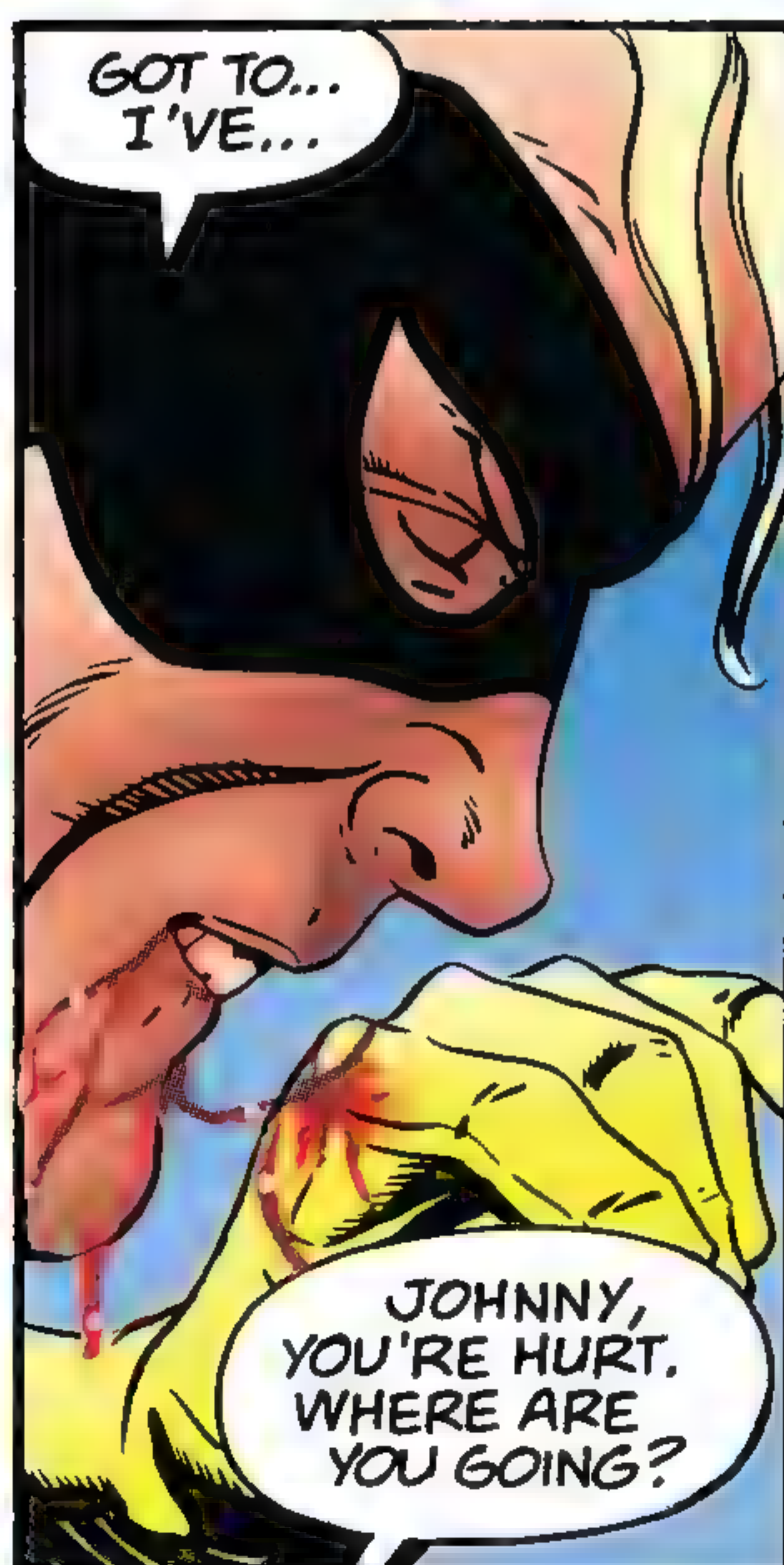
YOU ARE
HISTORY!

I think
we've got it.

...the big
guy's back.

OH?

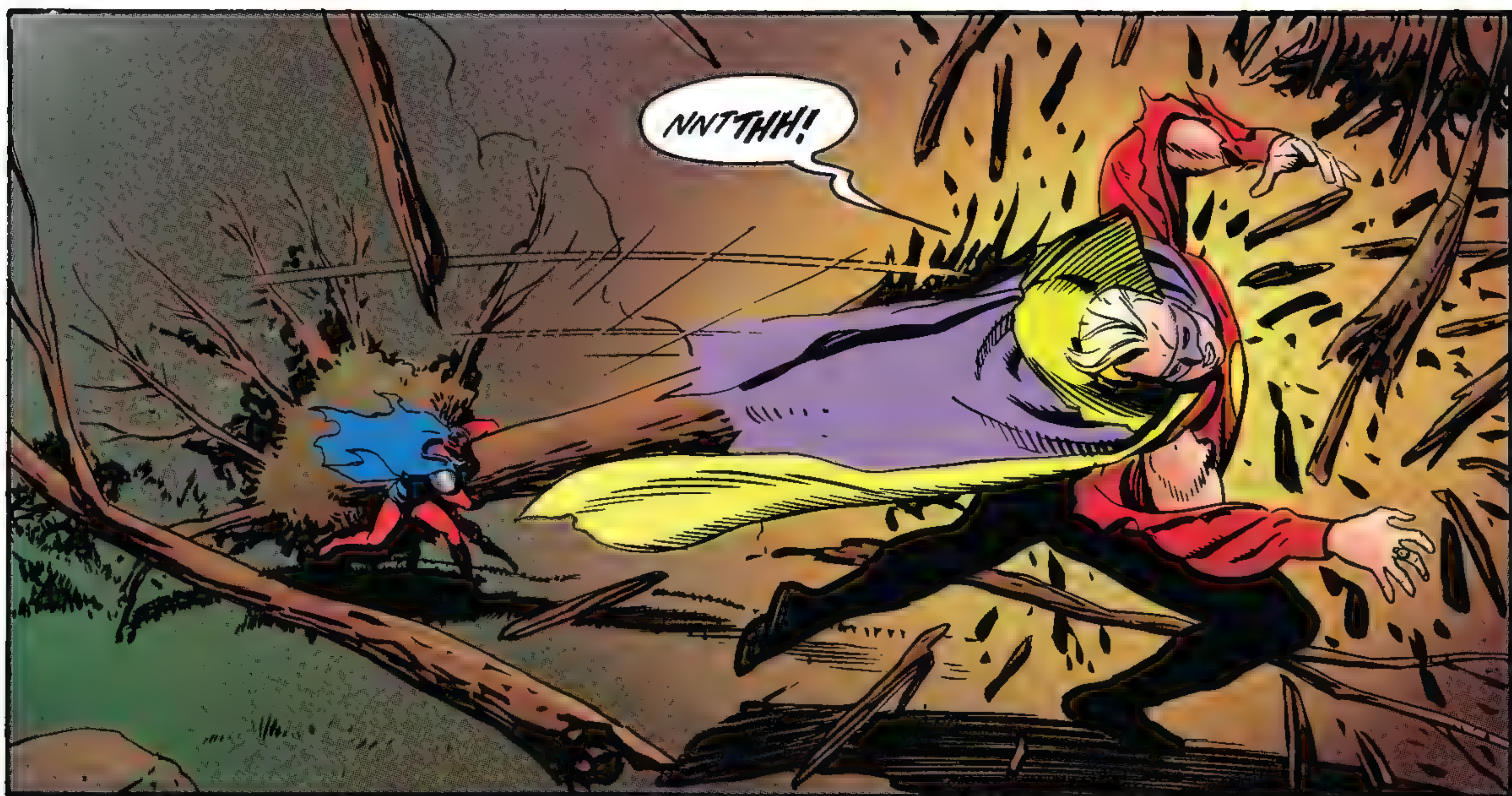


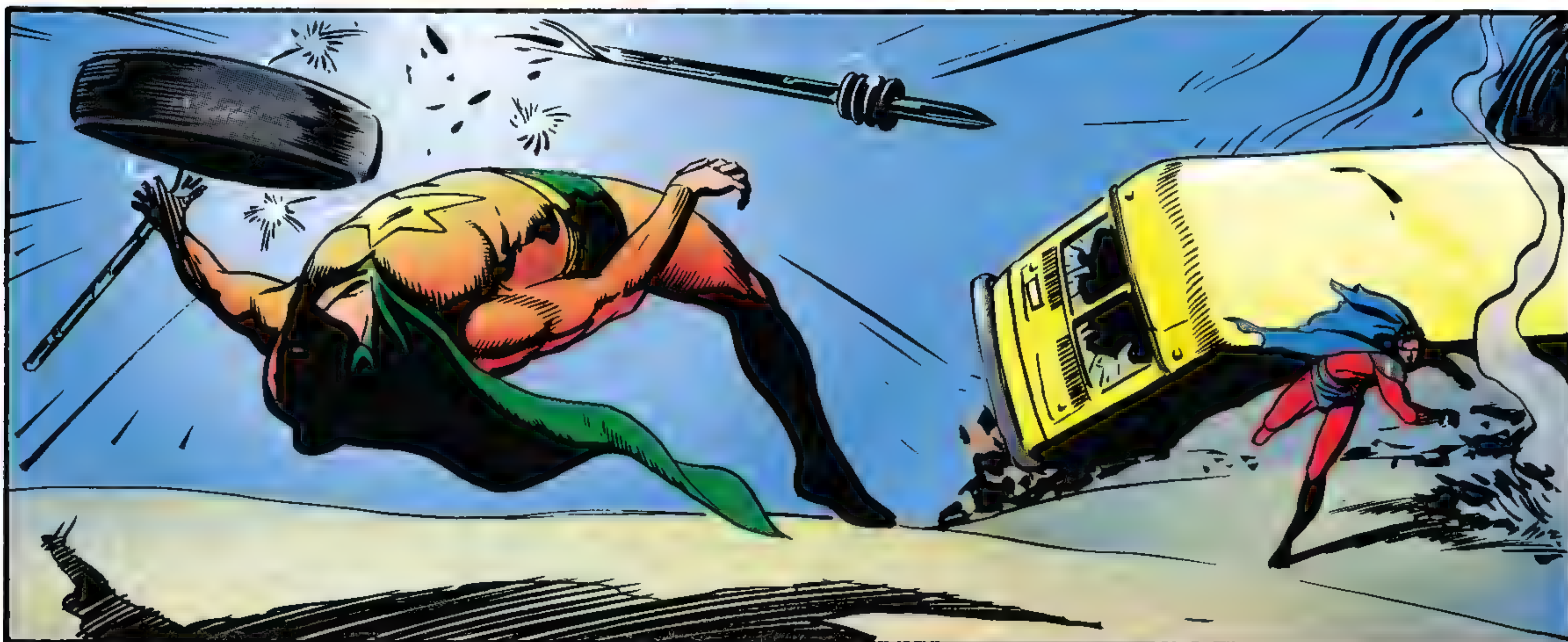














HEROES
NEVER
QUIT.

NEVER!

NEVER.



THE ROD... BROKEN...
BUT STILL A
WEAPON.

... CAN STILL
USE IT.

SOMEONE...
HAS A PLAN...
SUDDEN...
DESPERATE...



... WHILE A
PHOTOGRAPHER
LURKS AMONG
THE RUBBLE.



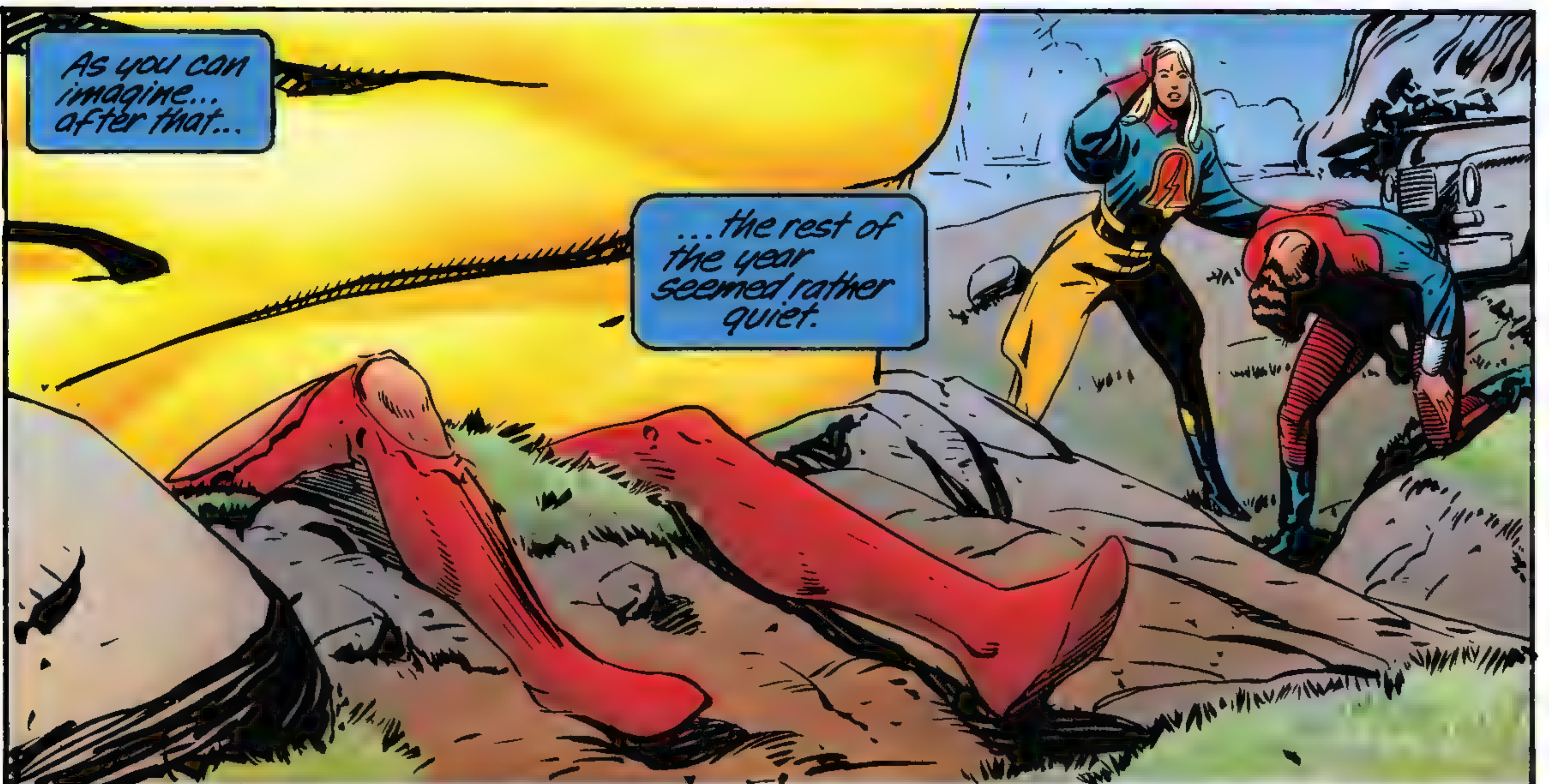
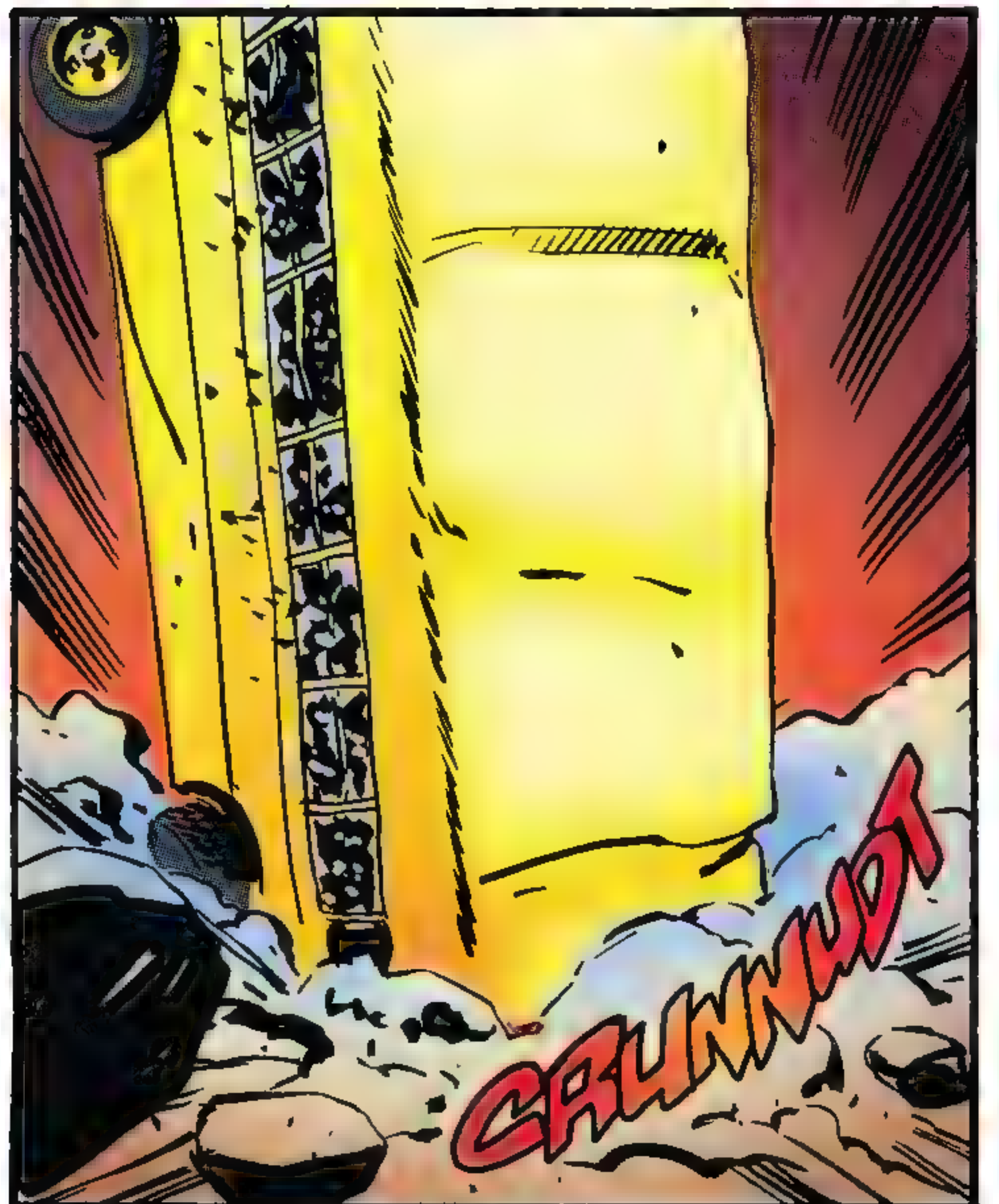
FINGERS... FUMBLING...
FOCUSING... TRYING TO...

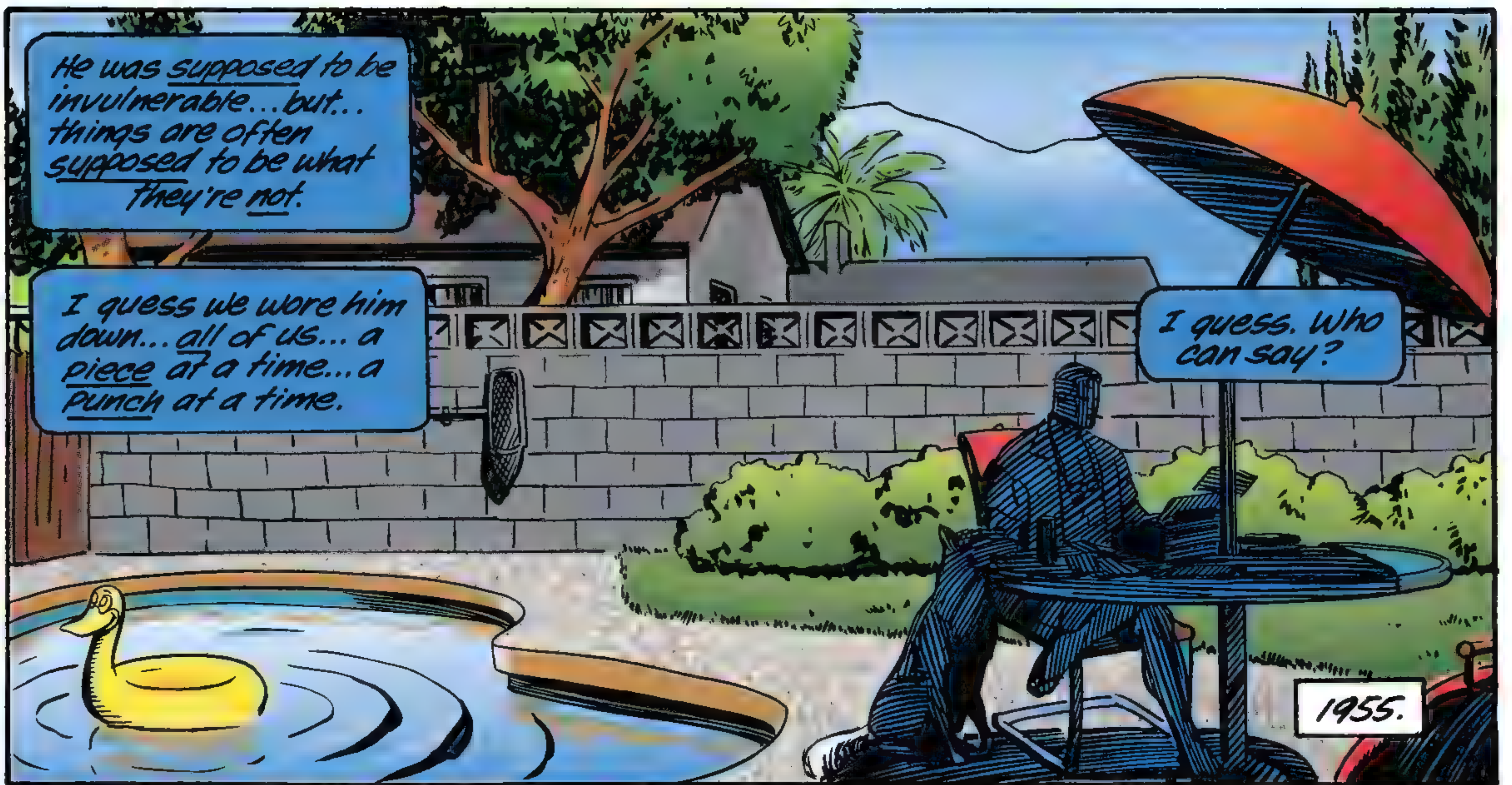
THE SHUTTER
CLICKS...

GO ON
THEN...
DO IT...

I'M NOT
AFRAID!

AND POSTERITY
CAPTURES A YOUNG
MAN'S DEFIANCE.





He was supposed to be invulnerable...but... things are often supposed to be what they're not.

I guess we wore him down... all of us... a piece at a time... a punch at a time.

I guess. Who can say?

1955.

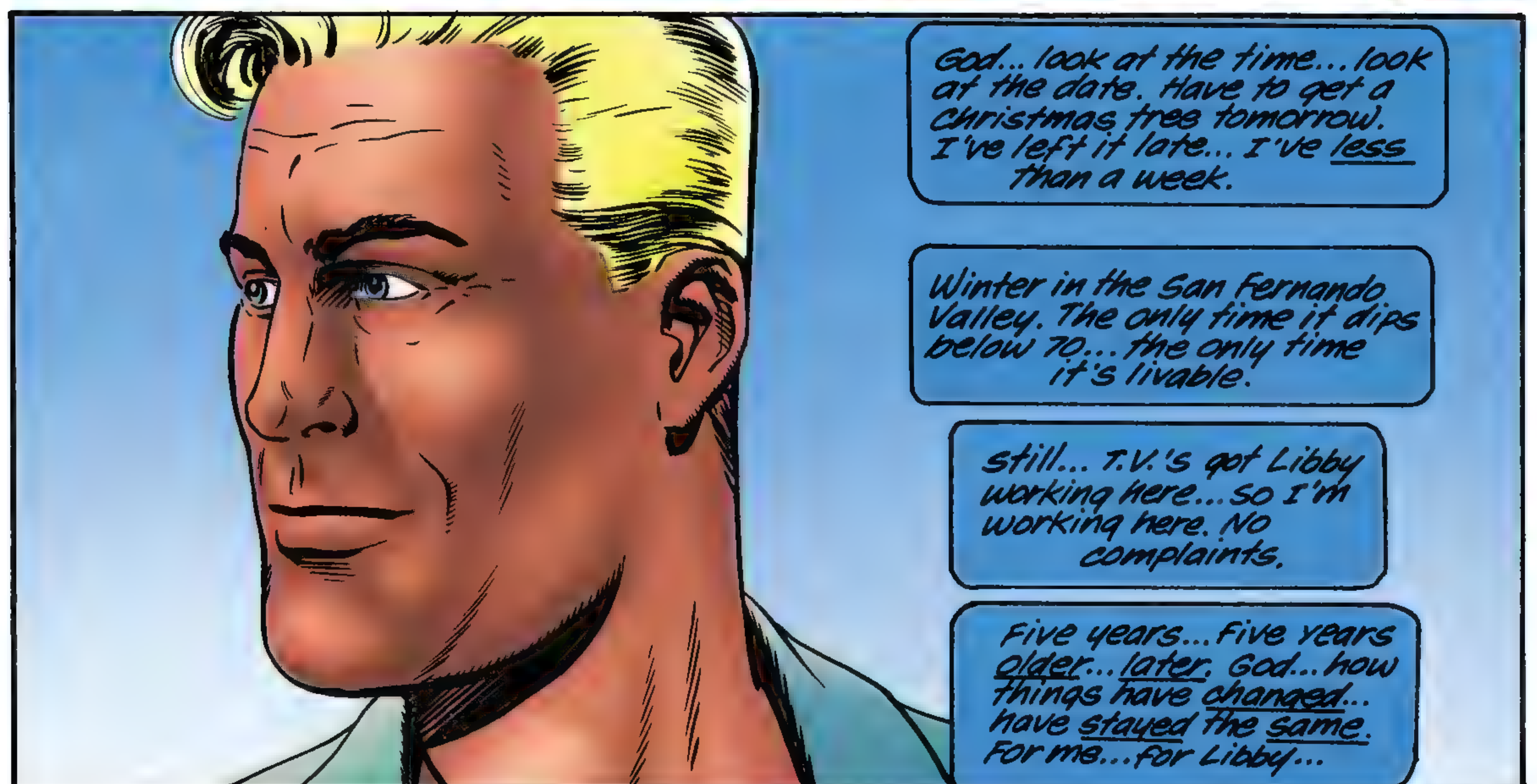
Maybe there were more answers to be found in the Humanite's diary. But the government confiscated it... and promptly denied its existence.

Hmmn...ha... and with the memory of that whole horrible day ebbing year by year, I sometimes think they might be right.

In fact, they denied everything... all the fantastic stuff. Thompson was a hero gone bad. Dunbar was a hero gone mad.

And that was that.

Sometimes.



God... look at the time... look at the date. Have to get a Christmas tree tomorrow. I've left it late... I've less than a week.

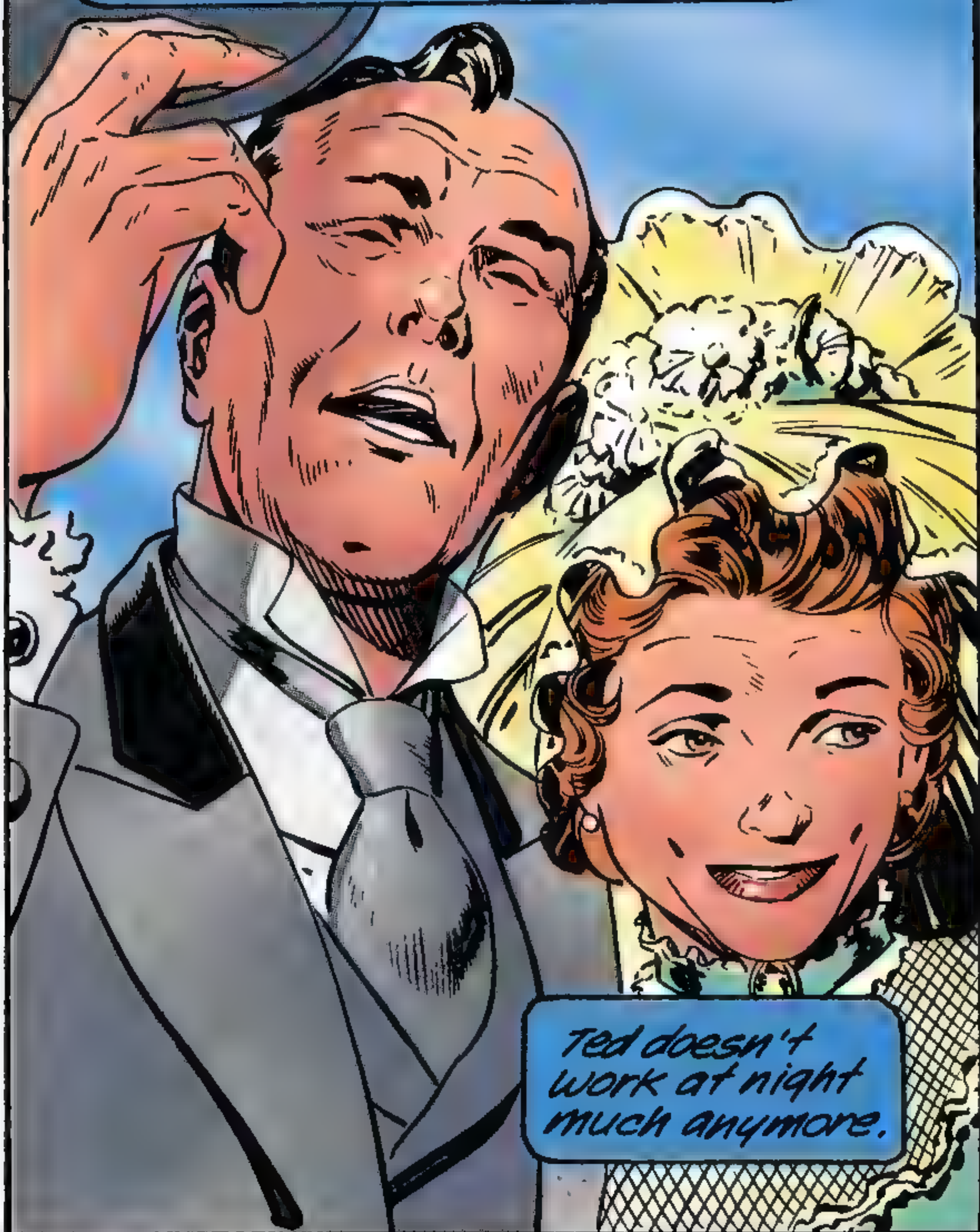
Winter in the San Fernando Valley. The only time it dips below 70... the only time it's livable.

Still... T.V.'s got Libby working here... so I'm working here. No complaints.

Five years... Five years older... later. God... how things have changed... have stayed the same. For me... for Libby...

...for everyone.

Ted Knight got better, slowly... happier. In '53 he got married... to a girl with average looks and a great sense of humor. Just what he needed.



Ted doesn't work at night much anymore.

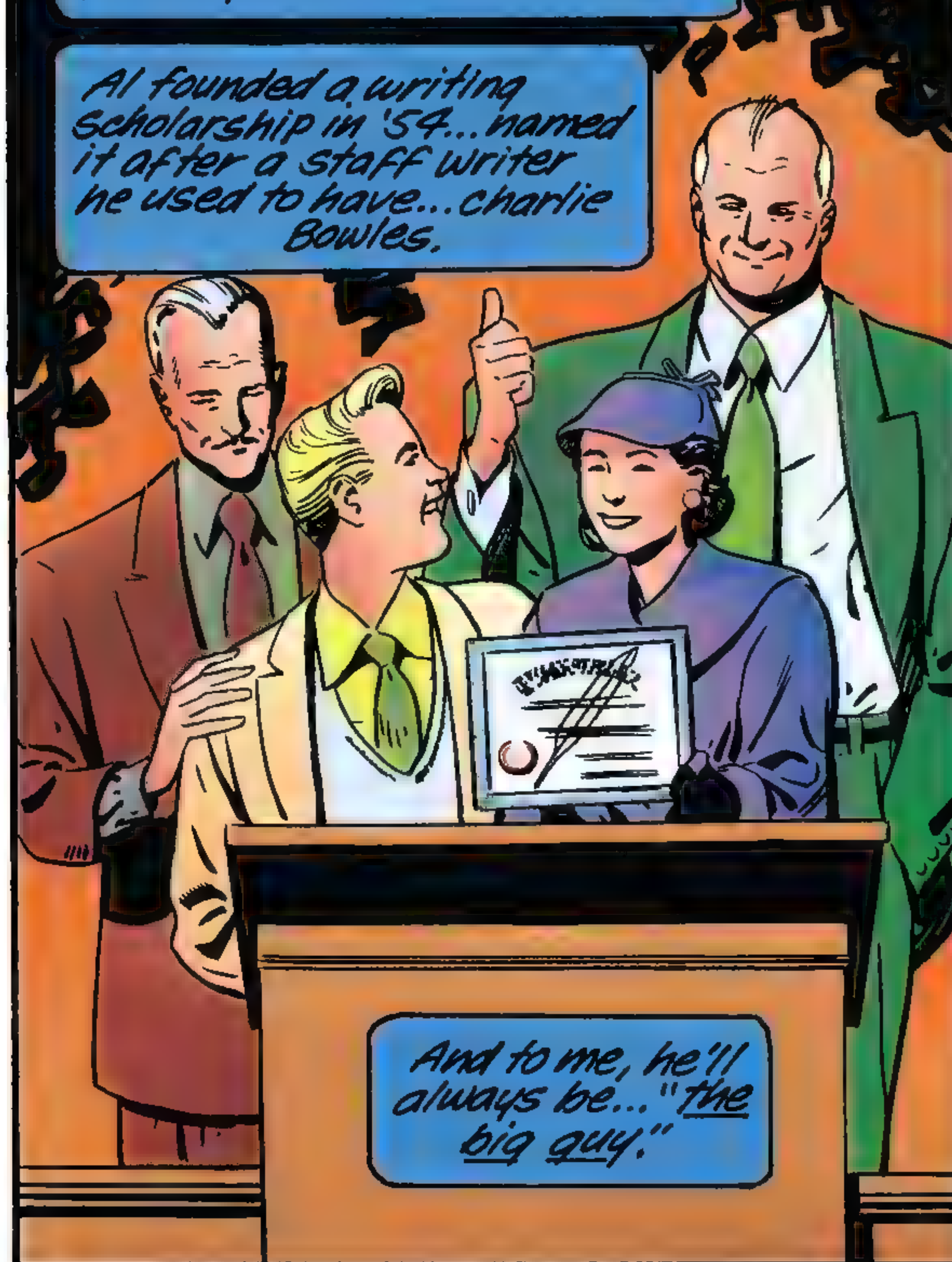
Paul Kirk recovered from his injuries, liquidated his assets, and returned to Kenya to hunt and find himself.

He disappeared in the jungle in '51.



Alan Scott did the only thing he could... he bought into television. And ended up leading the race... as ever.

Al founded a writing scholarship in '54... named it after a staff writer he used to have... Charlie Bowles.



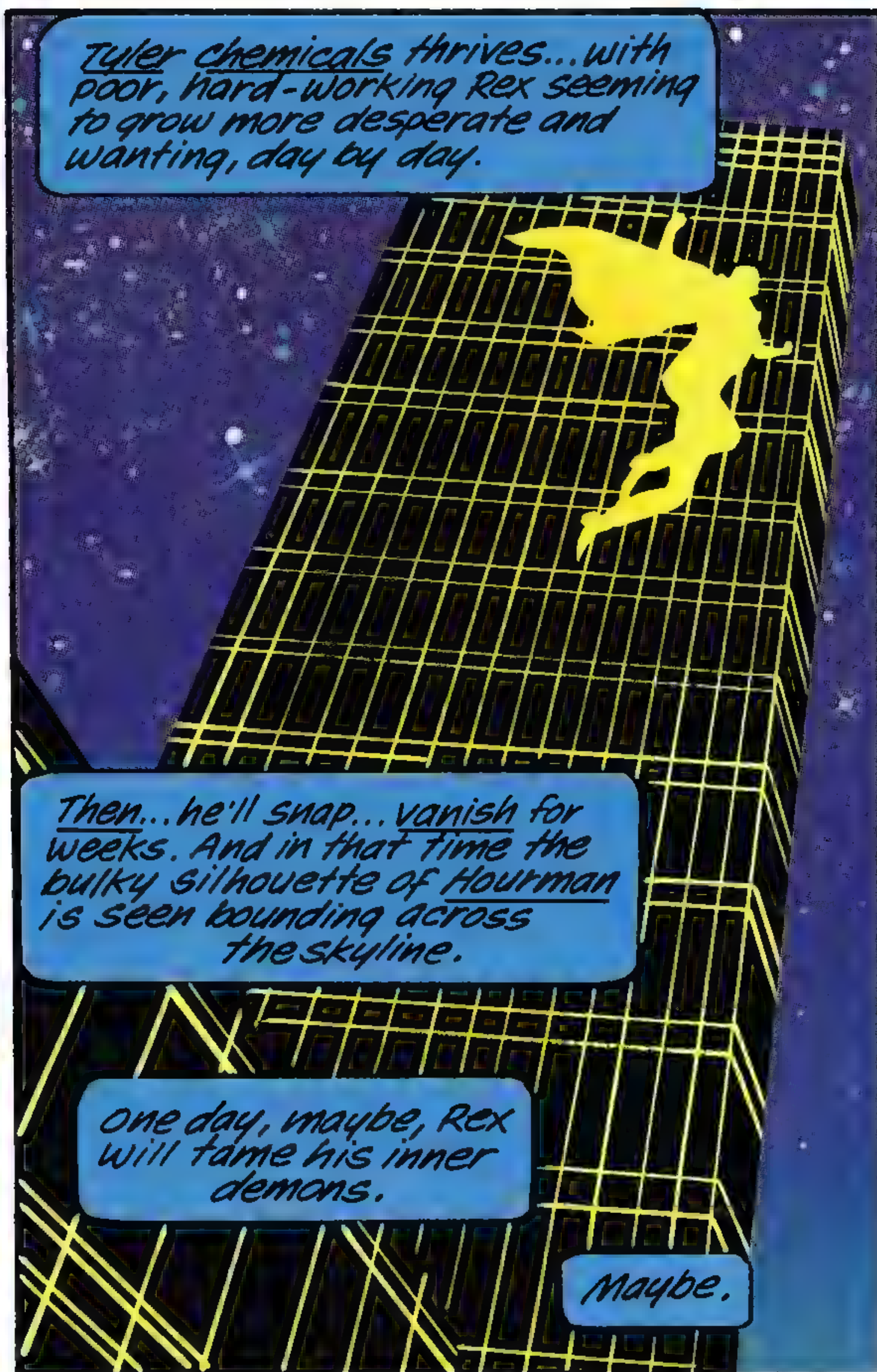
And to me, he'll always be... "the big guy."

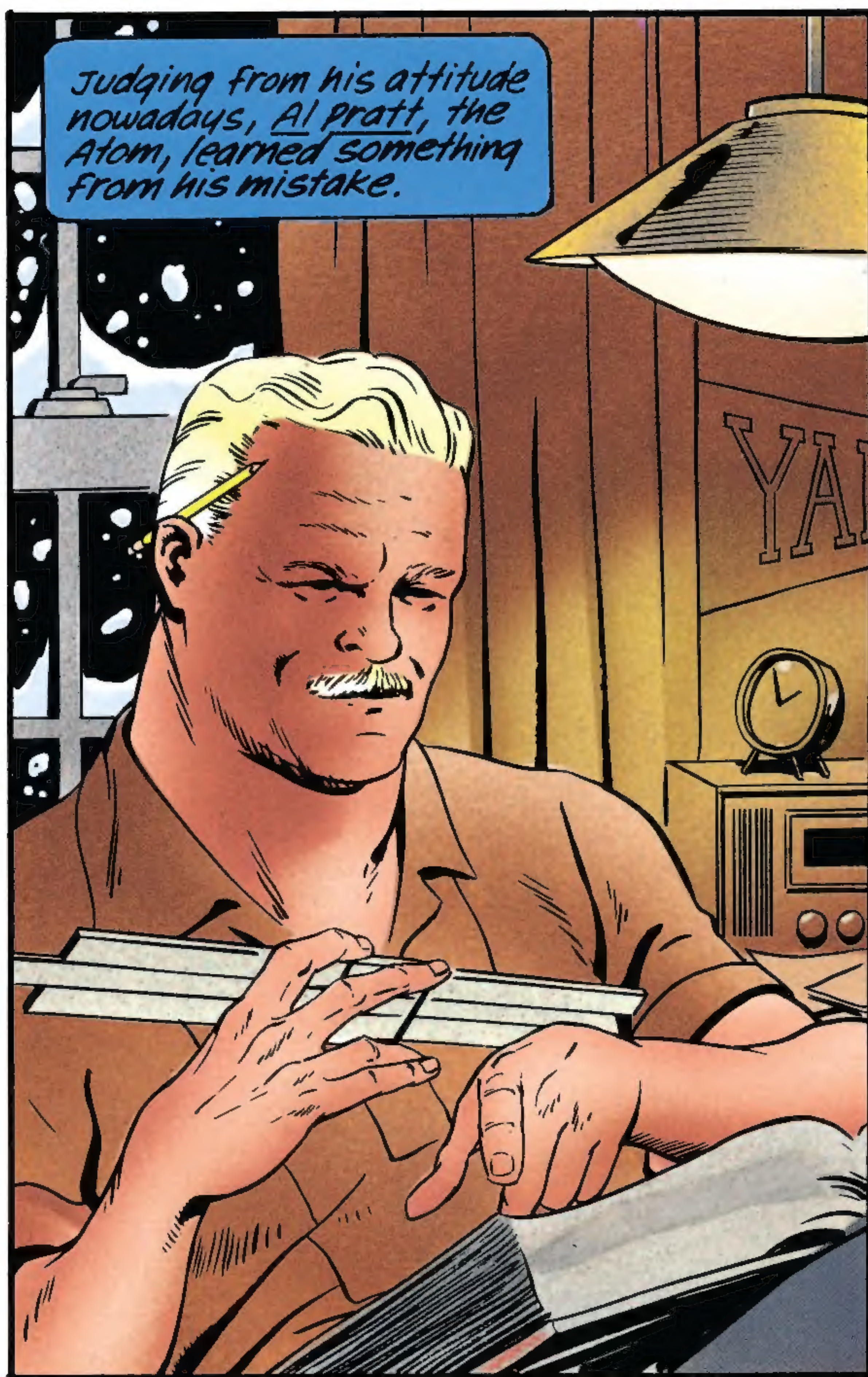
Tyler chemicals thrives... with poor, hard-working Rex seeming to grow more desperate and wanting, day by day.

Then... he'll snap... vanish for weeks. And in that time the bulky silhouette of Hourman is seen bounding across the skyline.

One day, maybe, Rex will tame his inner demons.

Maybe.





Judging from his attitude nowadays, Al Pratt, the Atom, learned something from his mistake.



Johnny Thunder on the other hand...



Poor Paula. With Lance's death, she went off the deep end.

Last I heard she'd made the F.B.I.'s most wanted list.

They say it's only a matter of time before she kills someone.



And Libby... maybe it's time she and I re-tied the knot.

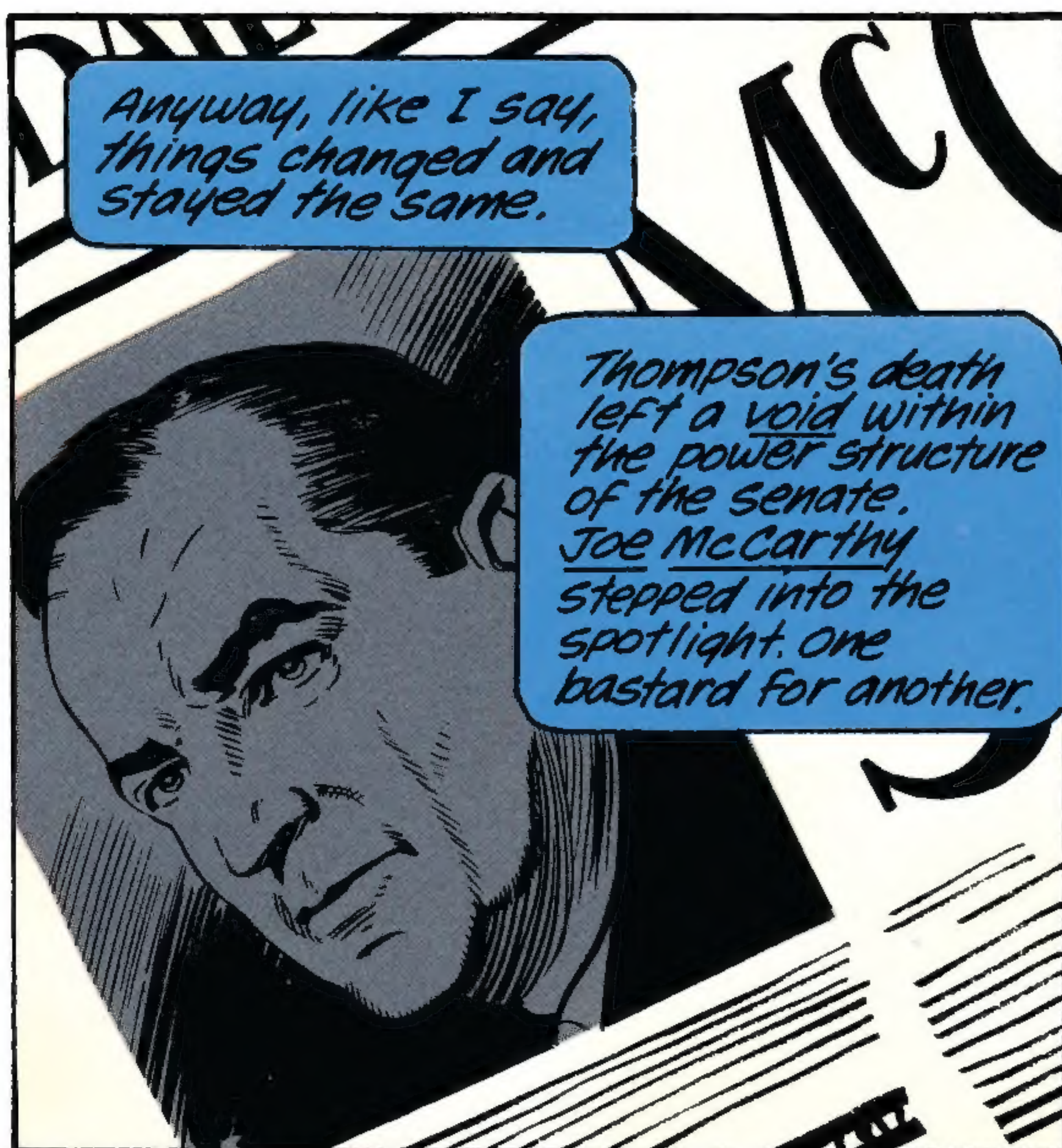
But she rediscovered her independence during her time with Jon Law, and now she's loath to jeopardize it.



Whatever.

As long as she doesn't stop loving me...

... I'm happy.



Anyway, like I say, things changed and stayed the same.

Thompson's death left a void within the power structure of the senate. Joe McCarthy stepped into the spotlight. One bastard for another.



The witch hunt continues, with one of its casualties being...

...the Justice Society... who disbanded... vanished into a puff of smoke on another grey day in Washington.

And no one seemed to care.

After all, they were the past.

The future...




...was that unknown kid who fought alongside us. Took the name of Captain Comet.

A photo taken of him that day... captured the public's heart with the promise of tomorrow.

Ironic, seeing as all he did was get his nuts crunched, while Libby... a woman... was the one who actually brought Dynaman down.

Still, he's brave... new. Like I say, he represents... he is the future.

And Comet isn't the only one...



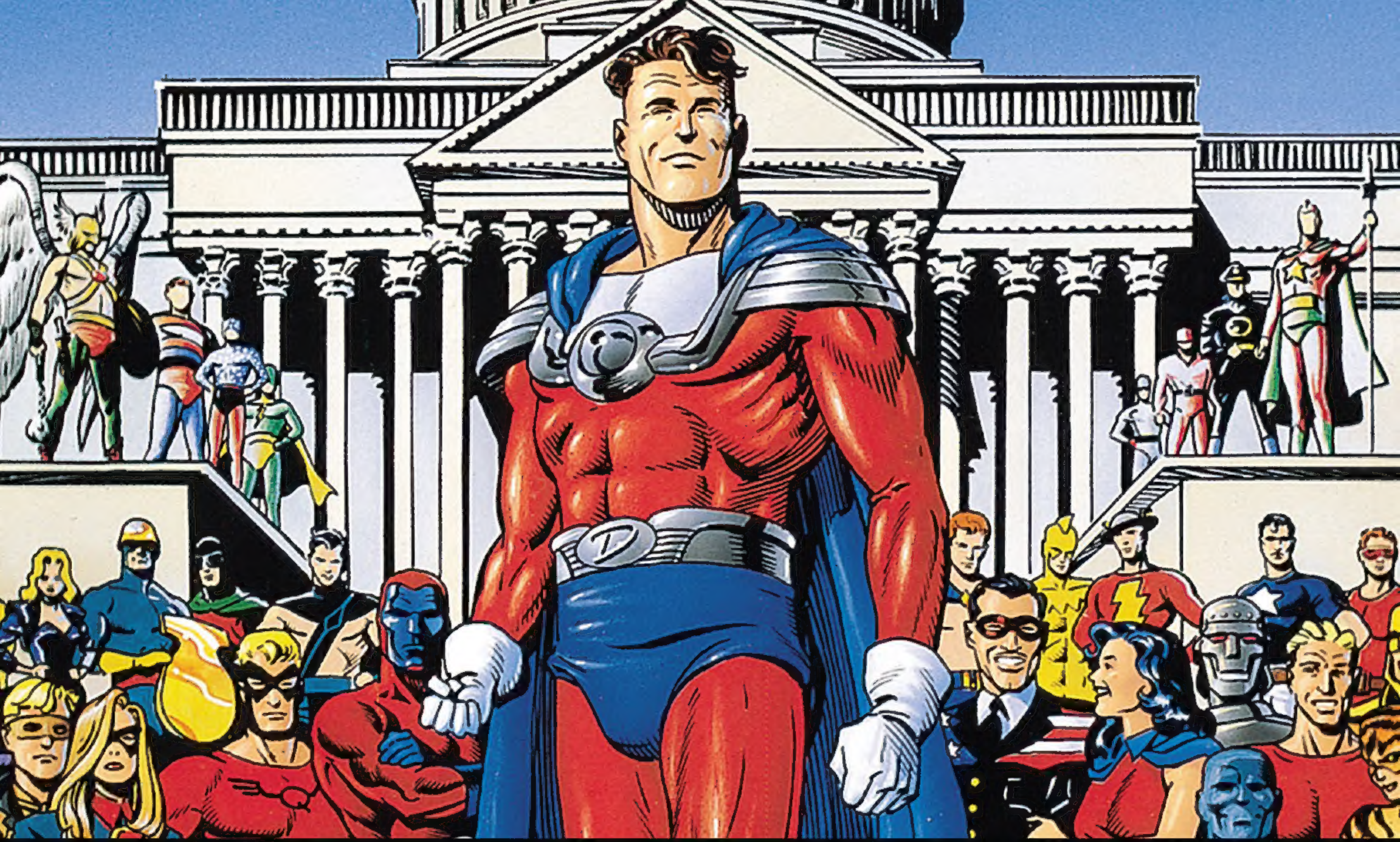
...other heroes are coming forth... leaping into the headlines with an almost monotonous regularity.

*Young heroes,
young faces...
young powers.*

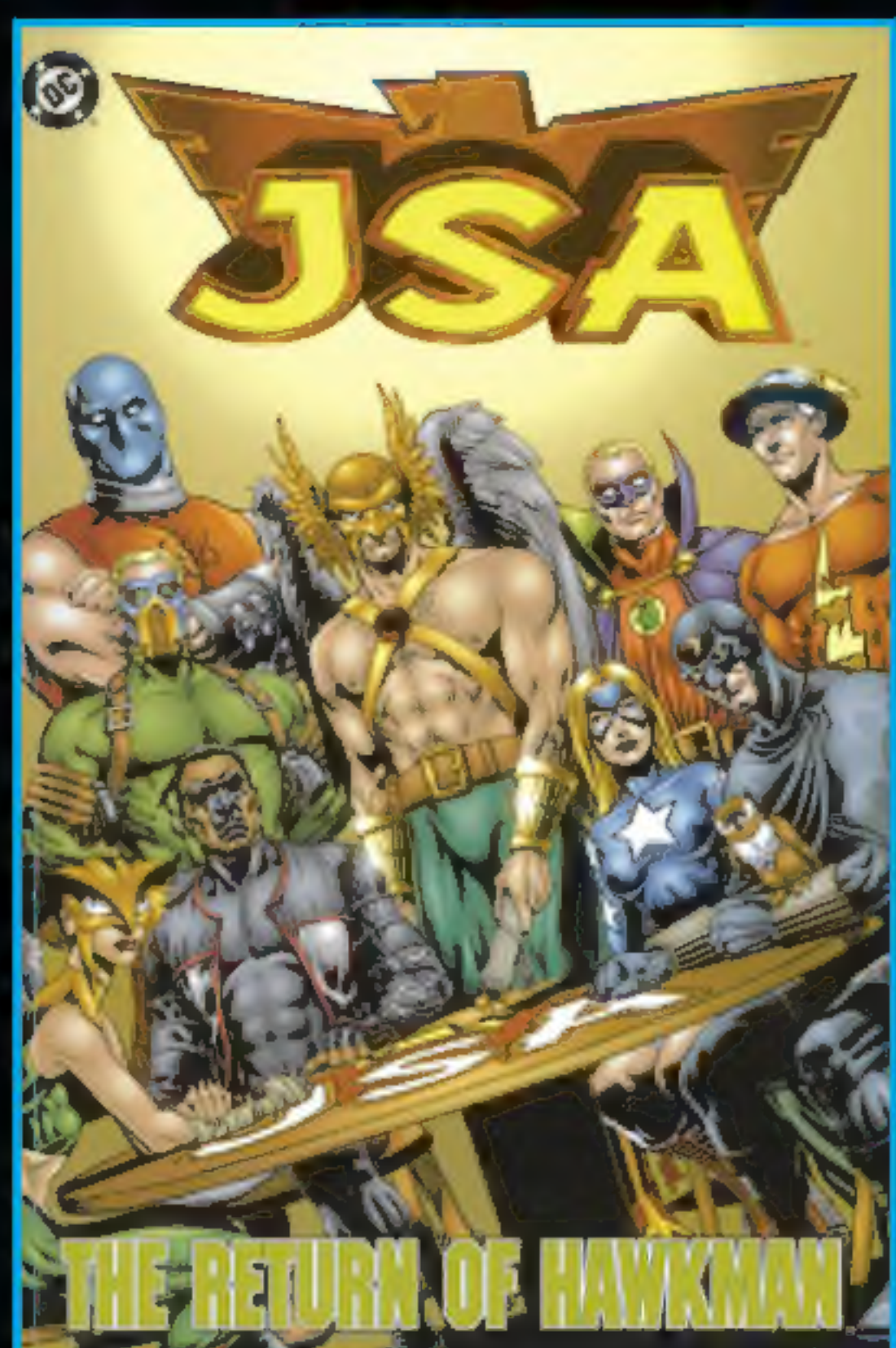
*And it's their
turn... their
time.*

*For them, a new
age... as fresh
and clear and
bright...*

*...As sterling
silver!*



A DIFFERENT LOOK AT A DIFFERENT ERA.



And don't miss the JSA's earlier adventures!

What James Robinson, Paul Smith and Richard Ory have accomplished with *THE GOLDEN AGE*, under the deceptively safe aegis of the *Elseworlds* logo, is a very witty dissection of post-World War II paranoia, using those selfsame teenaged creations, the Mystery Men of the Golden Age, as the crux of the story.

What James Paul and Richard have done for us is to take a peek under those masks and get behind those disarming grins — to use the charming innocence of those beloved Mystery Men as a wonderful metaphor for a country still trying to convince itself it was a land of innocent dreams.

— Howard Chaykin from his introduction

Some of the greatest heroes of the 1940s, including the original Green Lantern, Atom, Hawkman, Starman, and others, return in this epic tale. The story follows their postwar adventures as they battle evil in a world they fear may no longer need them. And as their importance wanes, a new hero, Dynaman, rallies the nation behind his fascist agenda.